

# The CLERGY REVIEW

NEW SERIES VOL. XLIII NO. 12 DECEMBER 1958

## THE SPIRITUAL LIFE AND THE LAY APOSTOLATE<sup>1</sup>

THESE reflexions, which for the most part place a problem, were the result of a feeling of inadequacy with regard to the contents of Retreat lectures given to the Legion of Mary some eighteen months ago. I felt that I had not faced the problem of these souls trying to do more than the bare essentials for Christ in the modern world. Many questions presented themselves to me in this connexion. They were apostles and their apostolate could not be overlooked during the time of Retreat. But where did this apostolate fit into their spiritual lives in their own outlook? Was it like hanging a hat on a peg, the peg being the Catholic Faith, the hat being the Legion of Mary? Did they see the Legion of Mary as an outlet for something which is of the very nature of the Faith, the work of "redeeming the times"? Or was the Legion a case of simply doing "their little bit" for their respective Parish Priests? These questions brought me to the stage of facing far more basic questions, for the answer to the immediate issues at hand lay in the answer to the more basic questions. In one word, with the lay apostolate in view, I found myself face to face with the spiritual life of our Catholic people at large. And in this regard I asked myself the following questions, making an attempt to answer them:

1. What is the view of the ordinary good Catholic with regard to his Religion, the view which forms his spiritual life?
2. What is the nature of this spiritual life?
3. Is the apostolic spirit of the very essence of this spiritual life?
4. What must be done?

<sup>1</sup> These pages contain, substantially, the text of a lecture delivered to the Divine's Current Affairs Society at Ushaw College in the March of this year.

The last question had to be faced because the general conclusion which presented itself stressed the need for a complete reconsideration of the spiritual life of the modern Catholic, especially when one had the apostolate in view. I hope my meaning will become clearer as we proceed.

### ACTIO SEQUITUR ESSE

Although aware of the fact that the lay apostolate and Catholic Action are terms expressing realities with specific definitions, I do not intend distinguishing them during the course of these reflexions. The very term, however, Catholic Action, calls to mind a very well-known philosophical axiom and provides me with a solid foundation and a good starting point. "Actio sequitur esse", actions are what the beings are who perform them. There is no need for me to labour that point here. It is a very obvious axiom, but its obviousness in no way lessens its importance and depth. And in no place is that importance more evident than in the field of the lay apostolate and Catholic Action. Indeed, the power, the victory and the very foundation of this wonderful expression of Catholic life are dependent upon the recognition and faithful application of this axiom.

One cannot help thinking, however, that many well-intentioned souls entering the field of the lay apostolate and Catholic Action, either as participants or directors, fail from time to time to apply this axiom in its entirety. Thus on the one hand you have many who stress the notion of "Esse", spiritual life and spiritual formation, and overlook the fact that "Actio" must be something real, something truly apostolic; on the other hand you have many grasping the meaning of "Actio" but overlooking the need, the basic need, for "Esse". The result in either case is lack of progress, frustration and despair. The only approach is the approach with the intention of a complete application of this axiom. As will be gathered from my introductory remarks I am concerned here with "Esse", with the spiritual lives, if you will, of the modern Catholic as an actual or potential participant in the lay apostolate and Catholic

Acti  
ques  
ordin  
whic  
neces  
to bi  
offer

I  
Cath  
into  
stabl  
the a  
that  
Chris  
no d  
never  
in the  
life i  
daily  
life. T  
Taw  
write

th  
co  
we  
in

That  
it doe  
the m  
so far  
from

<sup>1</sup> Re  
<sup>2</sup> T

Action. And with this said I now face immediately the first question which presented itself to me. What is the view of the ordinary good Catholic with regard to his Religion, the view which forms his spiritual life? To answer this question it seems necessary to distinguish the varying factors which have brought to birth the view of Religion found among modern Catholics. I offer three main factors: History, Education and Environment.

### HISTORY

In days now past in the life of this country, in the age of Catholic England, there was no need for a man to put Christ into the City. Christ was there already. The building of the stable of Bethlehem in the town centre was not then considered the achievement of an apostolic few. It was generally recognized that Christ had a right to both the private and the public heart. Christendom had a depth of meaning in this regard, clouded no doubt by political circumstance from time to time, but nevertheless real. Christianity pointed to that life-giving force in the heart of man, Christendom meant the projection of that life into every sphere of public life. To separate Christ from daily life was to lose the meaning not only of Christ but of daily life. The shadow of the Cross fell over every enterprise. Professor Tawney bears witness to this fact under one aspect when he writes:

To the most representative minds of the Reformation, as to the Middle Ages, a philosophy which treated the transactions of commerce and the institutions of society as indifferent to Religion would have appeared not merely morally reprehensible, but intellectually absurd. . . .<sup>1</sup>

That conjures up one aspect only of society, true enough, but it does place us in the atmosphere of those days. Personality for the mediaevalist implied the call to divine sonship. We may go so far as to say with M. Maritain that "everything was regarded from the angle of the divine".<sup>2</sup> Man was well aware, though

<sup>1</sup> *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (Pelican, 1938), pp. 246 and 247.

<sup>2</sup> *True Humanism* (London: Bles, 1939), tr. M. R. Adamson, p. 3. Cf. pp. 1-26.

without reflexion, of that reality called "grace", aware of its power and glory. He knew that when by personal fault he upset the order of society in anything touching upon the laws of God, as in cases of marriage and justice, he had not merely the civil power to reckon with but, which was far more important, he had the "Hound of Heaven" on his heels. Thus though far from perfect (and how those mediaevals could sin!), mediaeval man knew that there was something called sin, recognized it for what it was. This was his social and personal vision, he could not escape it. Sin lay at the root of failure, virtue gave birth to victory; normality was measured by the Cross, abnormality began in its denial. The Son of God and the Son of Man, the Divine Lover on the Hill of Calvary, He was the centre of daily life.

The terrible and tragic dissolution of the Middle Ages, in its most tragic expression, began not simply in the pitching of secular power against papal, but in the seeping into man's consciousness that man alone, separated from God, was a wonder in himself. The estrangement had begun. Eventually, Religion and daily life found themselves in a divorce court under the plea of incompatibility of temperament. No need to discuss here the tragedy of the Reformation. Suffice it to say that over the years a hundred and one factors came together to make final the separation of Religion and Life. Religion belongs to the heart and the church, daily life can be understood without it. I am not for a minute suggesting that every single individual refused to allow belief to influence their daily lives, but the point is that it was generally recognized that *Religion* and *Life* could be separated without doing violence to either.

In the last century the Catholic Church came really to the fore again, but it must never be forgotten that it came to birth once more in this atmosphere of separation. Catholics in the minority could not but be influenced by this trend of the times. For apart from anything else, it was broadcasted far and wide that whatever system of beliefs was incompatible with daily life, the Roman system fell into this category above all others. In spite of their achievements, and achievements there were, our Catholics could not prevent themselves from being influ-

ence  
such

or  
m  
th  
a  
o  
"

Fam  
and  
play  
Cath

F  
from  
walk  
scho  
with  
fear;  
com  
the  
acco  
bequ  
so th  
our  
man

g  
o

1  
2  
p. 11



enced by this mental attitude. And this rebirth of the Faith in such an atmosphere was to have its effects.

Here a set of poor Irishmen, coming or going at harvest time, or a colony of them lodged in a miserable corner of the vast metropolis. There, perhaps, an elderly person, seen walking in the streets, grave, solitary and strange, though noble in bearing, and said to be of a good family, and a "Roman Catholic". An old-fashioned house . . . and the report attaching to it that "Roman Catholics" lived there. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Family history plays a part in the formation of the personality, and I firmly believe that this historical factor has had its part to play in the formation of the view of Religion of the modern Catholic, the view which forms his spiritual life.

### EDUCATION

For the most part Catholics, however, are no longer exiles from public life. That much we can say with certainty. Catholics walk in the high places of this land's administrative spheres; our schools and churches are rising in the fast-spreading towns and with regard to our schools we have voiced our opinions without fear; Catholic Bishops have appeared on television; converts are coming "home". But in the heart of the modern Catholic has the change in the times, has this welcome into society, been accompanied by a change in outlook? Has, in a word, the bequest of history been finally and irrevocably beaten down, so that now the view of Religion, forming the spiritual lives of our people, is one which "embraces the whole sum-total of man's activity"?

Our dogmas, however, are not a collection of answers to a group of problems. Rather, they are the light and food of a way of life.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Henry Newman, *Sermon: The Second Spring* (London: C.T.S., 1950), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Yves de Montcheuil, *For Men of Action*, tr. Charles Parnell (Chicago: Fides), p. 11.

That quotation is the test. If we can say that belief and dogma, action and discipline, for our modern Catholic is the "light and food of a way of life", that their Faith makes life, then we can say that *Education*, our Catholic education, in the school, the pulpit, the press and, above all places, in the home, has achieved or is at least achieving its true purpose from which flows the formation of a mental attitude which sees Religion not as something outside Life but as something making Life, going to the very roots of man's existence.

Christian Education [says Pope Pius XI], embraces the whole sum-total of man's activity, sensible and spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, domestic and social . . . to ennoble it, guide it, and perfect it according to the example of Jesus Christ.

And again:

Far from renouncing the activities of this life, far from suppressing his natural powers, the true Christian nurtures and perfects these, uniting them with his supernatural life in such a way that the life of nature is enhanced and provided with more effectual aids, not only for the attainments of the spiritual and eternal goods but also for the needs of the natural order.<sup>1</sup>

But has this been our presentation of the Faith? Would it not be truer to say that our ordinary Catholic sees his Faith, sees the supernatural, merged into a list of dogmatic statements, a code of morals, tradition and discipline? Has the notion of practice ousted that of Life in matters of the Faith? Do we present the Faith as something rather to be lived *by*, than simply lived? True enough, obligations must be insisted upon, discipline must be enforced, truths and principles clearly and simply brought home. But have we neglected to open up the positive beauty of the depths from which these obligations flow, showing that a discipline is meant to keep those depths pure and unstained, offering truths and principles as the means to a clearer and more precise knowledge of those depths? "If you love me keep my

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Education of Youth* (Divini Illius Magistri), tr. Canon G. D. Smith (London: C.T.S., 1949), paragraphs 119, 123.

commandments." Have the "dos" and the "don'ts" won the day at the expense of love? I venture the opinion that we have neglected to open up sufficiently the positive side of the Faith, the "life more abundant" which Christ brings to fallen man. I do not mean that we have neglected to show that Religion has and must have an influence on daily life, helping man to overcome temptations, bringing true and firm principles to a harassed world, consoling and giving strength when the need for consolation and strength makes itself felt. But I do feel that we have neglected to show that Religion makes Life Itself, enriches it, floods into every action.

To see Catholicism as one religion among others, one system among others, even if it be added that it is the only true religion, the only system that works, is to mistake its very nature, or at least to stop at the threshold. Catholicism is religion itself. It is the form humanity must put on in order to finally be itself.<sup>1</sup>

There is the challenge, "the form humanity must put on in order to finally *be itself*". Have we got this over in our education, education as we have taken that term above? It is my opinion that we have not, and consequently Religion and Life are still in separation.

#### ENVIRONMENT

And so we come to the final factor in the formation of the view of Religion which forms the spiritual life of our Catholics. And this I call, for the want of a better term, "Environment".

With general names the social philosophers and the social psychologists are busy in our age hitting off the trends of the times. We have all been caught up in this new "nominalism". So we call our age a "materialistic" one. And unthinking is the man who denies it this name. But unthinking also is the man who leaves it at that. And by this I do not mean to say that we must go out of our way to find an answer, that is surely taken

<sup>1</sup> Henri de Lubac, S.J., *Catholicism*, tr. L. Sheppard (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1950), p. 153.

for granted among those who have a thought for the dignity of the human person. No, my purpose here is to express the causes of this materialism. The causes are many, as we all know so well. But so often what are merely the occasions in this context are given the power of causality. Thus to say that the cause of materialism in modern society is the increase of money in the hands of the average man is merely to state the occasion but not the cause. We say that spiritual bankruptcy, the loss of spiritual ideals, is the cause of materialism. Others defined the thesis very vigorously that materialism is the effect of the social rash of advertising propagandists. All this is very true, but it does not seem to go deep enough. There is something more to be said, and it is this "something more" which is so much *ad rem* to the present problem which I have in front of me. Materialism is the expression of *Life* of modern man, it is contemporary man's assertion of life, an expression of a newly found freedom, debased though it may be. In a word, contemporary materialism cries out, "This is Life!" It does not say, "This is a philosophy of life," no, "This is Life!" And our young Catholics, our youth, leaving the shelter of the school, better growing out of the shelter of the school, stepping into society at large, are confronted with this state of affairs, hear this cry of the world. They do not see a view of life, they do not see materialism as a philosophy of life, they see materialism as *Life itself*. At the same time they see Religion, their Catholic Faith, as a denial of so much of this and, as we assure them, they are quite right in so thinking. But a problem makes itself now felt. If this is Life and if Religion is a denial of all this, then Religion and Life have no meeting ground, there is no point of contact between the two. "What then is Life for me?", asks the young Catholic. They must have Life. Nobody can deny them that. But what is it? We say their Religion is their Life. But if they have received a Religion that is no more than a system of beliefs, a code of morals, a set of devotional practices, there is no Life for them. Some hold tight to their Faith by sheer force of habit, by the force of a traditional home. But for many, because the tension between their "environment" and their Faith becomes too overpowering, the less tangible thing for them goes, and that is the Faith. If Religion has not, then, been

offer  
orde  
for t  
and  
out

V  
seco  
who  
"Ess

how  
tices  
mak  
of t  
and  
very  
mus  
belo  
Ind  
the  
rela  
you  
or t  
forc  
"pe  
the  
Cat  
bat  
tha  
selv  
forc  
"I  
wor  
sho  
tha

offered to them as Life, as the "form humanity must put on in order to finally be itself", the conclusion is the same for all, even for those who have a deeper appreciation of the Faith. Religion and Life are two separate entities and the best must be made out of a very strange and unnatural state of affairs.

### ESSE CATHOLICA MODERNA

With all that said, the time has now come for me to face my second question: What is the nature of the spiritual life of one who has come under the influence of these factors? What is the "Esse Catholica Moderna"?

Two words may answer this question: *Keeping Good!* And how is this to be done? By a multiplication of devotional practices, by joining a sodality, by keeping out of harm's way, by making sure of their "duties"—this is more or less a summary of the programme for the Faith. The fact that our Catholics, and particularly our young Catholics, must go to work and live very often in an atmosphere that is one long tension, that they must have their little pleasures, these things are not seen as belonging in any way to the Faith, they are valueless necessities. Indeed, so much outside the things immediately connected with the Faith are seen as either a direct attack upon the Faith or related to the things that are militating against the Faith. The young fellow, for example, taking his tools out of his toolbox or the young girl taking the cover off her typewriter are people forced to live in unfortunate surroundings, they are just "people"—workers, if you will. The young fellow or girl closing the door of the church on daily Mass—yes, daily Mass—they are Catholics. In church we see them gathering forces for the day's battle with the powers of evil, gathering strength for the day that they may keep holy, in the very act of sanctifying themselves; at work they are doing their best to keep their spiritual forces in line, they are workers doing a job, earning a wage. "I am not asking that thou shouldst take them out of this world," said our Saviour to His Eternal Father, "but that thou shouldst keep them clear from what is evil." But more often than not the only solution for our Catholics is the solution which

would withdraw them from the world. Keeping the Faith, looking after themselves, doing their best to make their Religion have some influence on their daily lives, here they are day in and day out, but *Life itself*, their working lives, the daily round, this has no connexion with Religion except so often as a force which brings them to the brink of throwing away the Faith.

They are completely turned in upon themselves and the society of men passes them by as something apart, even alien.

I now come to my third question: Is the apostolic spirit of the very essence of this spiritual life?

### ACTIO NON SEQUITUR

Exclusive concentration upon oneself cannot give birth to an apostolic spirit. In the true apostle self is seen released upon the world's salvation and the sanctification of self is seen projected into the City of Man. The apostolic Christian sees the city as his responsibility because the city is the responsibility of Christ. Weeping over the city and determined to do something about it, tears that are but a sign of a heart moved to compassion and ready to die for the love of souls, this is the role of the apostle. For the apostle it is never simply a case of victory over his own soul, over the citadel of his own soul, this personal victory is accompanied by a burning desire for the victory of Christ over the temporal city, through the spiritual citadels of the wandering crowd. The true apostle knows no rest until he sees that no place is left empty around the fireside of the Faith, he cannot sit still as long as he is conscious that there are souls wandering in the dark and the rains and the winds of indecision, unbelief and temptation. The apostolic man sees the crowded buses and trains, the busy factories and offices, the streets, the homes, the hearts of the multitude as his daily challenge. And what does all this add up to? It adds up to a glorious union of Life and Religion and each tiny action, no matter how trivial, is sanctifying self and bursting the bonds of self, breaking through self upon a temptation-torn world with a force that is divine. From the Calvary of his own weaknesses, nailed to the Cross of his own temptations, he looks out upon and appreciates

the temptations and weaknesses of others, looking for the twentieth-century Good Thieves, the twentieth-century Magdalens, the twentieth-century Centurions who, with a little encouragement, would turn to Christ, fall in love with Christ, confess the Godhead of Jesus. He leads

... a life which in the eyes of the world is fully human and integrally Christian, a life which sticks to the world and cannot be torn from it, but which is not of the world and through which God is revealed.<sup>1</sup>

He knows that the Catholic Faith is "the form humanity must put on in order to finally be itself".

Here, then, is the apostle. And we can say with all certainty that a Faith built upon the notion of the separation of Life and Religion, which in its turn turns the soul in upon itself, such a view cannot give birth to a spiritual life capable of producing the type of man we have described above.

And now I have arrived at my final question: What must be done?

#### ESSE CATHOLICA REFORMATA

At this stage I would like to remind my reader of a remark made in the opening lines of this article. These reflexions are the outcome of a personal problem, almost a confession of failure, if you will, to meet a problem. Consequently they must not be taken as written in a bitter or critical spirit. By and large I have placed a problem and if that problem has never arisen for others, all well and good. If, however, other minds have come up against the problem expressed, what I have said and these closing remarks may serve to set those minds on a road of restating the problem and offering a solution in a more concise and clearer fashion than they have found here. Truth in any field is the result of a corporate effort, it is the corporate effort that we need. And with that reminder given, I now pass on to my final question: What must be done?

<sup>1</sup> Montcheuil, *op. cit.*, p. 15.



What is life, natural life? Is there an unchanging process lying at the basis of all life? There is, surely, an unchanging movement at the basis of all natural life, our life, the day-to-day act of living in the company of our fellows, a process which science and luxury may make easier but cannot change. And this process I sum up in three words: Bread, Love and Suffering. Every person is bound to some form of activity from which flows his daily bread; this is the basic need, as we say, of keeping body and soul together. The existence of a job, the collection of a wage, the buying of food, all this summed up in the one word, Bread, brings to our minds the first element of life's unchanging process. And then that beautiful expression of the human heart, Love, will always break through, bringing light to the darkest hour. A man must have friends, must receive and give sympathy to others. Love, then, is life's second unchanging element, love which is the basic cause of the continuation of our kind. And, lastly, we must all admit to the existence of suffering if not to its very experience. Few men have escaped it. This is life. Joy and happiness are not of this unchanging process, for joy and happiness are dependent upon the meaning we give to Bread, Love and Suffering. If a man wants happiness he must put a meaning into this trinity. We say that life has its meaning from God, its Author. And we can say that God gave it a meaning in no vague way. For God became man and lived the very process of Bread, Love and Suffering. He worked with His hands, made Love His very driving force and put a new and wonderful meaning into Suffering for all time by dying in pain and agony on a Cross. In so far, then, as God takes over the process of Bread, Love and Suffering, through the life of Christ, in that same degree is life's meaning deepened and the process itself captivated by divine joy, transformed by values that are eternal.

With this unchanging process before us our modern Catholic must be made to see that Christ gives, in all reality, a meaning to Bread, Love and Suffering. And they must be made to see (here we touch upon the heart of the matter) that Christ has not lived it once, but lives it still. In a word, the doctrine of "other Christs" must be made the very centre, the point of union, of Life and Religion. Modern man must be made to see that the

Chris  
imita  
two  
and v  
Pales  
His li  
insert  
of ou  
here  
an in  
Relig  
of the  
capal  
or a  
of mi  
centu  
must  
as on  
conte  
The p  
hold  
of the  
and t  
circu  
me to

Hi  
Fa  
my  
pr  
an  
of  
an

T  
discip  
that  
offeri

<sup>1</sup> Jo  
the Chus

Christian revelation is not built upon a foundation that spells imitation, but one that cries out, "Life!" We do not look over two thousand years and imitate Christ, trying to live the ideals and wonders of His life in Nazareth's cottage, on the lanes of Palestine, on the hill of Calvary, we rather allow Christ to live *His life in us*. We do not go back, we allow the eternal Christ to insert Himself by His saving grace into the temporal confines of our lives. Sanctifying Grace, the glory of "other Christs", here is our starting point, here we must express ourselves with an insistent clarity. For this is the approach which unites Religion and Life and here is Religion manifesting the beauty of the hidden depths of our Faith, positive and possessing the capability of making saints. I cannot be a St Francis of Assisi or a Little Flower, I am myself and Christ takes over this self of mine, longing to sanctify me, to live my life. I am of this century, this particular town, this job, and in this context I must become a saint by allowing Christ to live His life in me as once He lived it in St Francis and the Little Flower in another context, another period of history, another personal situation. The past holds a challenge, it is true, and the lives of the Saints hold a challenge, but the challenge of the past and the challenge of the lives of the Saints have meaning only in so far as the past and the lives of the Saints can be projected into my time and circumstances. The Saints challenge me in so far as they force me to open wide my life to the life of Christ.

The Son of God came into the world to incorporate us into Himself and to make us live by Him as He . . . lives by the Father. He came that men might possess life eternal. . . . This mysterious evolution by which Christ is formed in us is the principal purpose of divine revelation and the basis of all growth and development. To this evolution is ordained the divine light of Faith, to it the entire gospel, to it the institution of the Church and even the incarnation of the divine Word.<sup>1</sup>

This is Religion that is not a set of devotional practices, a discipline, a cold list of truths, a code of morals. This is Religion that is Life. It is the cry of poor, weak and harassed souls, offering Christ a new humanity to live again in the City of

<sup>1</sup> John G. Arintero, O.P., *The Mystical Evolution in the Development and Vitality of the Church*, tr. Jordan Aumann, O.P. (London: Herder, 1950), pp. 1 and 3.

Man. And this is surely the answer to the problem I have set myself. The doctrine of "other Christs" is the hope for a groaning and bewildered age, groaning under the weight of its own temptation and helplessness, bewildered by an abundant satisfaction, which has been no satisfaction at all: Christ taking over Bread, Love and Suffering; Life and Religion united.

In every action we perform, every prayer we say, every suffering we endure, in our every act of love, we must bear in mind that we are "Christ", that Christ wishes still to act, pray, suffer and love in us. We shall then . . . get rid of our inordinate, mean, cramped desires, in order to clothe ourselves with the breadth of view and unbounded desires which animate Christ in His actions, prayers, sufferings during His mortal life.<sup>1</sup>

#### ACTIO SEQUITUR

The closing remarks are obvious. For if our Catholics are "other Christs" then they are possessed of not merely the self-sanctifying mind of Christ, they are the Christ of Golgotha, the Saviour of pain and agony, the Saviour of the thirst for souls, the King of the Good Thief. From their hearts must go out the redemptive desires of the Heart of Jesus. In them Mary loves Jesus, Mary is really their mother, but it is very often Mary of the Fourth Station in the Way of the Cross, the silent Mary, allowing the terrible and agonizing work of redemption to go on without any offer of sensible consolation, without any interference. And this gives an apostolate that is real, flowing from a true Catholic life, flowing from the Living Christ. In fact, there is nothing exclusive about the apostolate, every single Christian must be an apostle because every single Christian, if he is truly Christian, is the "other Christ". But this is the spiritual life that we must start with, build upon, develop. When we come to the more specific work of Catholic Action this spirituality must be there still. This is the "Esse" we must have if we wish for a true "Actio". And few there are who would deny the need for a living Catholic Action in our times.

FATHER AUSTIN, C.P.

<sup>1</sup> Paul de Jaegher, S.J., *One with Jesus* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1939), p. 16.

THE ELOQUENCE OF SACRED  
SCRIPTURE

THERE was a boy for whom a single text of Sacred Scripture was a vital factor in the beginnings of his attraction towards the priesthood. He had read it in an account of the life of Fr Damien in a school primer and, captivated by its music, recited it over and over again until it was entwined with the very fabric of his mind.

And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: Whom shall I send? and who shall go for us? And I said: Lo, here am I, send me.<sup>1</sup>

He did not know who Isaias was, or that those words were Sacred Scripture, and not till he had been captivated by their music did he understand their meaning. So St Augustine, listening to St Ambrose in the cathedral at Milan, was won by the eloquence before he was convinced by the doctrine.

And while I was opening my heart to learn how eloquently he spoke, I came to feel, though only gradually, how truly he spoke.<sup>2</sup>

The eloquence of Sacred Scripture is an important factor in the winning of souls. Indeed nearly the whole of Sacred Scripture is sacred eloquence. Much is verse, more poetic prose or impassioned oratory. Large sections were obviously written to be learnt by heart, handed down in tribal traditions, declaimed by children in school, chanted in temple worship. Even the starkly factual chronicles were written to be read aloud and the letters of the Apostles were in large part dictations to scribes. Indeed every single word of it was meant to be read aloud. General literacy is a very recent development. But even among the highly educated as late as the end of the fourth century, three hundred years after the last book of Sacred Scripture had been written, reading without reciting the words was so rare

<sup>1</sup> Isaias vi, 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Confessions*, v, 14.

that a man of books like St Augustine found it remarkable enough to warrant a comment. He tells us in his *Confessions* how when he was waiting to speak to St Ambrose, he watched him reading. "When he read," he writes, "his eyes travelled across the page and his heart sought into the sense, but voice and tongue were silent."<sup>1</sup> And he suggests two possible explanations for this strange way of reading: either he wanted to keep the reading matter secret, lest he should be importuned with questions, or he wanted to preserve his voice.

In a sense, then, all ancient literature was eloquence. But Sacred Scripture was intended to be an ever-living eloquence, recited, sung, read aloud, learnt by heart. It was meant not to form a book to be read by the fireside with eyes running swiftly along the lines, but declaimed in assemblies. Obviously, then, its eloquence is a most important factor.

In these days of busy translating of the Scriptures, it is surely not out of place for a preacher to remind the scholars that besides striving to give the exact sense of the text they must also echo its eloquence. This is not merely a practical matter, to do with the mechanics of speech; nor is it merely a matter of literary taste. It would be equally unbecoming to strive to turn the words of God into sonorous phrases for the elocutionist as to make it elegant writing for the aesthete. The meaning of the words is the gold for which the translator digs. But the style has considerable bearing on the meaning. The style is not only the man, but the man at the moment of speaking. If he is moved deeply, he will speak with great urgency, if he is emphatic he will be likely to speak with staccato simplicity, if his mood is elevated his style will be lofty. One thing he will not do, strive for effect by adopting a false style. So we learn his mood and his meaning from his style. The trained stallion walks, trots or gallops in ordinary fashion according to his master's needs, but when in his natural state he rides in command of a herd of mares, mysterious urges rise up from deep in his nature which are expressed in the high-stepping prancing, with intricate rhythm and majestic rearing and cavoring, which is a wonder to behold. Highly skilled trainers can teach horses so to behave under command, which is the skill of

<sup>1</sup> *Confessions*, vi, 3.

## ELOQUENCE OF SACRED SCRIPTURE 721

*haute école*. So great writers fit their style to their mood and their mood to their message instinctively. No imitation can ever be entirely successful. There are many different styles used in Sacred Scripture, but whether it be the style of the poet, or the preacher, or the teacher or the narrator, it is the flesh that covers the bones of the thought beneath. And nearly always in Sacred Scripture it is the style of the speaker rather than the writer. In fact, Sacred Scripture is Sacred Eloquence.

In his *De Doctrina Christiana*, St Augustine deals in three books with the process of discovering the sense of Sacred Scripture. In the fourth book he deals with the proclaiming of it to others. He returned to this book at the end of his life, to complete it and polish it. It is then the fruit of his most mature thought.

In considering how Christian doctrine should be taught, he goes to the Bible to see how the sacred authors expounded it. To his surprise, he finds all the tricks of the trade of the professional orator. This surprises him because as a youth he had considered the Scriptures to be barbaric in comparison with the pagan classics which he dearly loved. Closer examination reveals an eloquence which although not perhaps so uniformly perfect as that of the classical authors is more natural. The "tricks of the trade" are not tricks. But to his amazement and joy he finds a new kind of eloquence, warm and spontaneous, and so natural that thought and words seem made for each other, and the words come forth from the heart like the brides of the ideas. Here is all the high artistry that he analysed in the classics for the benefit of his pupils in the schools of eloquence, but here different, with a new strength and originality and spontaneity. The sacred author, with his assurance and strong and sincere emotions, does naturally what the orators do through artistry. St Augustine is like a trainer in *haute école* who sees a stallion riding high before a herd of mares and is delighted and amazed to see him performing not only the intricate paces which he teaches with such pains, but also freer and bolder movements taught by Nature.

And to whom does St Augustine first go to illustrate this? Not to the prophets or the psalmists, but to him who is often thought of as merely a letter writer. He analyses St Paul's great boast,

that piece of vigorous oratory dictated by a man with heart burning with indignation at the calumnies of his detractors and with anxious love for his children in danger of being led astray by these false teachers. From the fullness of his heart he spoke in the great style, the style of the orator, and in spite of the faults of translators the rhythms of his Greek have been transmitted through the Latin of the Vulgate to the English of the Douai. Without bothering with St Augustine's technical terms, we can study his analysis of the passage by indicating the members he finds in each period.

Seeing that many glory according to the flesh, / I will glory. (2)

For you gladly suffer the foolish / whereas yourselves are wise. (2)

For you suffer / if a man bring you into bondage. (2)

If a man devour you / if a man take from you / if a man be lifted up. (3)

If a man strike you in the face / (I speak according to dishonour / as if we had been weak in this part). (3)

Wherein if any man dare / (I speak foolishly) / I dare. (3)

The rhythm and the pace now change. There follow three stabbing questions, and the answers to them.

They are Hebrews? So am I!

They are Israelites? So am I!

They are the seed of Abraham? So am I!

The deliberate and emphatic boast which follows stands on its own, and is the end, as it were, of the first movement.

They are the ministers of Christ? / (I speak as one less wise) / I am more!

Four rhythmical and equal periods slow down the pace, but lead into the impetuous rush of the fourteen phrases, poured out almost in one breath, with an energy suited to the events which they describe, with which the saint tells of his sufferings in the cause of Christ.



## ELOQUENCE OF SACRED SCRIPTURE 723

In many more labours, / in prisons more frequently, / in stripes above measure, / in deaths often / . . . .

In journeying often, / in perils of waters, / in perils of robbers, / in perils from my own nation, / in perils from the Gentiles, / in perils in the city, / in perils in the wilderness, / in perils in the sea, / in perils from false brethren, / in labour and painfulness, / in much watchings, / in hunger and thirst, / in fastings often, / in cold and nakedness.

Another period of three members slows the pace for a moment. There are two final questions, charged with emotion and the final calm and dignified submission of his case to the judgement of God.

Who is weak and I am not weak? / Who is scandalized and I am not on fire?

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ / who is blessed for ever, / knoweth that I lie not.<sup>1</sup>

So does St Augustine submit this passage to scrutiny to see how it conforms to the ancient laws of eloquence which he had taught so often. He himself is amazed to find how Paul, without having learnt them, conformed to those laws. His final comment is: "Quanta sapientia ista sint dicta vigilantes vident. Quanto vero etiam eloquentiae cucurrerint flumine, et qui stertit advertit."<sup>2</sup> Such language not only teaches wisdom to those who are awake during the sermon, but even makes the man who is snoring sit up and take notice.

The rhythm of the original has suffered in translation, but it is remarkable how much of it has been retained, probably unconsciously, by the translators who tried faithfully to give the full sense of the original and not impose upon their rendering so much of their own personality that it became a different kind of language. A man's style tells his mood and helps to give clarity and force to his message. And here we may picture St Paul, walking up and down, his eyes flashing, his arms cutting the air with gestures, full of indignation and burning anxiety, dictating at speed his eloquent message to his children.

<sup>1</sup> II Cor. xi, 18-31.

<sup>2</sup> *De Doctrina Christiana*, iv, 12.

Among other examples which St Augustine uses to illustrate his point is one from the prophet Amos, the shepherd prophet with none of the theological and legal training of St Paul. He admires the exalted tone of the prophet's invective against the sensuous, bids us note the balanced members of the rolling periods and the harmonious grouping of melodious names.

Woe to you that are wealthy in Sion / and to you that have confidence in the mountains of Samaria. / Ye great men, heads of the people, / that go in with state into the house of Israel.

Pass ye over to Chalane, and see, / and go from thence into Emath the great; / and go down into Gath of the Philistines / and to all the best kingdoms of these: / if their border be larger than your border.

He points out how in the following passage the three groups, the proud, the lascivious and the gluttons, are addressed in three musical periods, each divided into two members, and each beginning with the pronoun.

You that are separated unto the evil day: / and that approach to the throne of iniquity.

You that sleep upon beds of ivory / and are wanton on your couches.

(You) that eat the lambs of the flock / and the calves out of the midst of the herd.<sup>1</sup>

St Augustine remarks that such language is intended not merely to instruct the hearer, but more important, to move him to repentance. The style of it is apt to inflame the will. "Sed bonum auditorem, non tam si diligenter discutiatur, instruit, quam si ardentem pronuntiatur, accendit."<sup>2</sup>

The golden dictum of St Augustine is applicable to Sacred Scripture as well as to pulpit oratory.

Dixit ergo quidem eloquens, et verum dixit, ita dicere debet eloquens, ut doceat, ut delectet, ut flectet. Deinde addidit, docere necessitatis est, delectare suavitatis, flectere victoriae.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Amos vi, 1 seq.

<sup>2</sup> *De Doctrina Christiana*, iv, 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, iv, 27.

The sacred orations which form such a large part of Sacred Scripture were delivered to enlighten, to please, but above all to move the hearers. To teach truth is of the essence of oratory. If it can be taught in pleasing language, it will be learnt more easily. But the aim of all endeavour, the victory to be striven for, is to move the heart. In the light of these principles, St Augustine's conclusion is inevitable even if provoking. He would be prepared to sacrifice exactness; he would be prepared to sacrifice pleasing elegance; but he will never sacrifice that which moves the will, he will never be without eloquence. So when he submitted the sacred writers to the tests of the schools of eloquence, he was delighted to find that they passed with flying colours. "Non solum nihil eis sapientius, verum etiam nihil eis eloquentius mihi videri potest."<sup>1</sup>

How important then it is for the translator to catch the eloquence of his author. That is the thing that moves the will. And that is a vital factor in the force of Sacred Scripture when used in sermons. How often one has had the experience of sensing the tension in an audience, almost as if it had held its breath, on hearing a familiar and eloquent text. Such texts as the great Petrine texts, the *Domine non sum dignus*, the psalm "Out of the depths . . ." have force because of their meaning, but are moving because of their eloquence. The catechism has made familiar to most of the faithful many texts of which the music is dearer to them than that of an old favourite song. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him,"<sup>2</sup> has emotional undertones that defy analysis, as indeed has that other familiar text: "It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins."<sup>3</sup>

We have not got in English a satisfactory translation of the Bible. Yet in spite of its many shortcomings, the Douai version has many virtues. In so many instances the vigour and the cadences of the Hebrew and the Greek have seeped down to it

<sup>1</sup> Nothing in Shakespeare is nobler than the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, and St Paul's prose-poem in praise of Charity is one of the greatest passages of all literature.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ii, 9.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Macc. xii, 46.

through the Vulgate when in other more erudite and perhaps exact translations they have been lost. One discovers more and more texts which, in spite of slight obscurities, one prefers to quote in the words of the Douai. One must beware of condemning what is new merely because it is not familiar and clinging to the old because of its associations only. The killing of darling phrases is often a most salutary exercise. But an even greater mistake than clinging to the old too tightly is the relinquishing of it too easily. So often the old translations are not only more eloquent, but clearer than the new.

The importance of a musical and rhythmical translation of the Scriptures for the liturgist is a subject too vast to be treated here. We must have words that can be sung in the vernacular. But it is of primary importance to remember that Sacred Scripture is Sacred Eloquence, and that the sacred authors have transmitted to us eloquence of so high an order that one of the greatest masters of eloquence that have ever lived said of them: "Non solum nihil eis sapientius, verum etiam nihil eis eloquentius mihi videri potest."

E. K. TAYLOR, C.M.S.

---

## NOTES ON RECENT WORK

### THE SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

**M**ANY priests wish they could give their people a deeper appreciation of extreme unction. Surely, they think, more could be made of this sacrament. What might be a wonderful pastoral opportunity often becomes a drearily dissatisfying occasion, because there is no real awareness of what is being done and why. Yet, if an enthusiastic priest resolves to do something about this, it is an easy prophecy that he will soon be pulled up short. The obstacle that will face him is that the theology of this sacrament is not clear. Make no mistake: the problem here does not only affect the student at his desk. The preacher cannot get this sacrament across to the people and give them a

living and lasting appreciation of its value, unless he can state in plain and forceful language its purpose. He must tell them without involved and obscure qualifications what it is intended to do, or, to put it in another way, what are its effects. Now, if he goes beyond the colourless and ineffectual summary of the average handbook, where the difficulties are eluded at the expense of clarity and force, and tries to get to grips with the theology of extreme unction, he will find out before very long that the effects of the sacrament are wrapped in the obscurity of a highly complicated and very tricky discussion. As a result, the powerful sermon he intended on the subject remains undelivered, and priest and people continue in their vagueness concerning a sacrament that is in fact a moving example of Christ's love and solicitude for His own. Can we obtain some help by going on a tour of the theological world and discovering what is at present afoot? That, at any rate, is the purpose of this survey.

A key question must be confronted. The priest must have an answer to it if what he says is to make sense to an ordinary congregation and not form a cloud of misty verbiage. Is this anointing a sacrament of the dying or a sacrament of the sick? No question is being raised here for the moment about the recipient of the sacrament. Let it be granted without comment that it is only for those who are in danger of death from sickness. Our problem is: what is the anointing intended to do for the recipient? Does the priest come first and foremost to prepare him for death? The anointing, in that case, is given as a final cleansing. By it, the person is purified from all that would hinder his entry into heaven. The thought that dominates is death and all is seen in that perspective. The anointing is a consecration of the Christian's death, an anointing for glory. Or, does the priest come in the first place to offer relief in bodily sickness to a person who is weighed down by it? The anointing, in that case, is directed to the needs, both bodily and spiritual, of a sick person as sick. The thoughts that dominate are those of reinvigoration, restoration and recovery.

Which is right? Should the priest keep in the forefront the thought of death and the help given by this sacrament in meeting it? The bodily effects are then kept in the background

as occasional occurrences that should not be made too much of. Or, should he stress the relief of sickness and point boldly to the hope of bodily recovery? Some readers will protest—perhaps indignantly—that a false dilemma is being created. This is not so. No unreal problem is being needlessly erected. Sufficient proof of this is that we meet on our theological tour two quite different attempts in recent times to renew the appreciation of this sacrament. Undeniably, the priest on the mission is faced with a choice between two approaches to this sacrament, approaches that are very unlike each other, and it is pointless to pretend that the choice he makes will not affect considerably the way he presents this sacrament to his people.

A book that an enthusiastic priest, anxious to strengthen the sacramental life of the parish, is likely to pick up is Fr Howell's *The Work of Our Redemption*.<sup>1</sup> It is a book of many excellences. What does it make of extreme unction? A nod is given to the possible bodily effect, but what is emphasized and enlarged upon, what the author is concerned to hammer home, is the efficacy of this sacrament in preparing the Christian for death. This is how he sums up the meaning of anointing: "The sacrament of the last anointing is the rounding off or consummation of the Christian life. It is the consecration of the Christian's death in Christ. Our Lord said in His Own last moments: '*Consummatus est*—it is finished.' The anointed Christian as he dies in union with Christ, can make those words his own" (p. 83). No doubt whatever; according to this account, the sacrament is primarily concerned with death.

The few pages of Fr Howell are noteworthy because they openly attempt more than a repetition of familiar truths. They have the excitement and vigour of a new statement. The author writes with the knowledge that what he is saying will be found surprising by many. This sacrament has been under-valued; we must change this: is his cry. But how? By returning to the older view of its effectiveness as a final cleansing. This sacrament is no less than an anointing for glory itself; it prepares the soul for immediate entry into the glory of heaven. Received with normal dispositions, it ensures escape from purgatory. The assumption made by the average Catholic that he will have to put in a

<sup>1</sup> Oxford, 1953.

fair  
uncti  
ing r  
death  
we a  
patri  
defen  
powe  
to do  
over  
make  
N  
ment  
prom  
welc  
pries  
is th  
view  
ment  
theol  
lariz  
grac  
Sinc  
theol  
publ  
write  
rests  
Nati  
The  
A  
bette  
The  
out  
men  
selve  
the  
that  
1  
Week,

fair time in purgatory is unwarranted pessimism. Extreme unction, the anointing for glory, is a sacramental means of avoiding purgatory. The anointed "leap, so to speak, out of their death-beds straight into their thrones in heaven!" (p. 81). This, we are told, was the common opinion of theologians from the patristic age to the Council of Trent. After Trent, the need to defend the existence of purgatory caused a fear of stressing the power of anointing, and this obscured the truth. What we have to do is to get back to the older optimism. That is the way to overcome any neglect or lack of love of this sacrament and to make it vivid in the consciousness of our Catholic people.

No priest will deny that such a presentation of the sacrament is likely to have a popular appeal. Purgatory occupies a prominent place in the minds of the faithful and they would welcome such an easy and assured escape from it. What makes priests reluctant to preach this view with unambiguous clarity is that they suspect its truth. Is their suspicion justified? The view goes back in modern times to Kern's treatise, *De sacramento extremæ unctionis* (Ratisbonae, 1907), although the Jesuit theologian seems to have been more cautious than his popularizers in insisting on the need for a full co-operation with the grace of the sacrament if the full effect were to be received. Since Kern, the opinion has received a fair amount of serious theological support. It has, besides, been written up for a popular public in an excited and unqualified manner by a number of writers, particularly in America. Fr Howell's own exposition rests, as he tells us, on a paper read by Fr Reinhold at the National Liturgical Week held in 1941 at St Paul, Minnesota.<sup>1</sup> The paper cannot be passed over without comment.

A student of the liturgy reading through this plea for a better understanding of extreme unction will find it very odd. The approach is ostensibly through the liturgy, the aim to find out if the liturgical movement has a new angle on this sacrament. We are told we ought to study the liturgical texts themselves and urged to recognize the "self-explanatory character of the liturgy". Then we are given an account of the sacrament that is certainly not derived from the liturgical texts and is to

<sup>1</sup> "The Sacrament of Extreme Unction in Parish Life", *National Liturgical Week, 1941*, Newark, 1942, pp. 135-41.



all appearances out of keeping with them. No attention at all is paid to the bodily effects; apparently, Fr Reinhold regards these as much too uncertain and rare to be a motive of any enthusiasm for the sacrament. What matters is the way this sacrament prepares us for death and glory. This effect is painted in such glowing colours that the reader cannot but feel that were a person placed in a state of such readiness for heaven a recovery from his illness would be a matter for great regret. What a different impression is given by the liturgy! In the texts for this sacrament there is not a single mention of death; on the other hand, the prayers that follow the anointing are full of the thought of deliverance from sickness and restoration to bodily health. The symbolism of oil and the prayers by which it is blessed have the same bearing. Whatever else may be said for this opinion, it does not rest on the liturgical texts. It comes, not from a study of the liturgy, but from theological speculation; and it has indeed as a point against it that its almost exclusive concern with death is out of keeping with the liturgical rite.

What about its claim to be traditional? The sweeping statement of Fr Howell that it was the common opinion from the patristic era to the Council of Trent is without basis. It is not until the Middle Ages that anointing is regarded as a preparation for death, and Master Simon in the twelfth century is, as far as our knowledge goes, the first to teach that the purpose of anointing is to prepare the dying for the beatific vision. Admittedly, after that, the idea was taken up by the great scholastics. These, despite their disputes concerning the exact nature of the principal effect of anointing, agree in teaching that the general purpose of the sacrament is to prepare the soul for glory, to remove what might impede his immediate entrance into heaven. This is a context into which the thesis of Kern can fit without difficulty. To that extent at least it can rightly claim support from the scholastic writers. Nevertheless, it is debatable whether even they would have given the conclusions of Kern, and *a fortiori* those of his more ardent disciples, their full approval. Kern looks at this sacrament chiefly as a means of escaping purgatory, and he stresses in particular its efficacy in remitting the total debt of temporal punishment; the scholastics were not so

prec  
prin  
for a  
Fran  
rem  
argu  
any  
the  
mat  
T  
Wha  
men  
gato  
Fr d  
puts

re  
p  
P  
fo  
th  
to  
e  
a

A sa  
whic  
any  
V  
busy  
this s  
The  
clear  
Gran  
ing to  
with

1 "  
abstra  
quotat

preoccupied with purgatory and temporal punishment. The principal effect of extreme unction as an immediate preparation for glory was given either as the remission of venial sins (the Franciscan school) or as the removal of the debility called the remnants of sin (the Dominican school), and it can be and is argued that they considered this final cleansing, together with any remission of temporal punishment, to be proportionate to the varying dispositions of the recipient and not total as a matter of course.

That leads us to take our criticism of Kern's opinion deeper. What is wrong is his basic approach. To suppose that a sacrament has been instituted primarily as a means of avoiding purgatory is to misconceive the general purpose of the sacraments. Fr de Letter in an article on the meaning of extreme unction<sup>1</sup> puts this well:

Moreover, a deeper and more fundamental error is at the root of this idea. For it tacitly supposes that the sacraments primarily aim at the next life, while in fact they have in view our present life on earth where we are souls-in-bodies. Their result for the future life is evidently only an effect of the specific fruit they yield in our souls during this lifetime. It is wrong, therefore, to reason to the specific purpose of a sacrament from its ultimate effect in the next world. The reverse procedure is the right one, and extreme unction is no exception to the rule (p. 188).

A sacrament to escape purgatory is the wrong banner under which to promote a new appreciation of this sacrament—or of any sacrament.

What have we so far ascertained in this attempt to guide the busy pastor? That it would be a mistake to arouse enthusiasm for this sacrament by preaching the popular version of Kern's theory. The last anointing does prepare the soul for glory and with its cleansing is connected a remission of temporal punishment. Granted. There is not, however, sufficient theological backing to preach unhesitatingly that those who receive the anointing with average dispositions "leap out of their death-beds straight

<sup>1</sup> "The Meaning of Extreme Unction", *Bijdragen*, 16 (1955), pp. 258-70. An abstract of the article is given in *Theology Digest*, 4 (1956), pp. 185-8. The first quotation given is from the abstract, the other two from the article itself.

into their thrones in heaven". But this has not yet answered our question: is this sacrament a sacrament of the dying or of the sick?

There are those who reject the thesis of Kern, at least in its popular unqualified form, and yet continue to keep this sacrament firmly and almost exclusively in the perspective of death. The article of Fr de Letter is very interesting in this respect. As we have seen, he forcibly rejects the point of view of Kern; but he likewise rejects the other new trend. This trend we have still to consider; it insists that this sacrament is primarily the sacrament of the sick not of the dying. Fr de Letter will not have it that there is any necessary choice between two alternative meanings for this sacrament. He urges:

Extreme Unction must be said to be neither simply the sacrament of the dying nor simply the sacrament of the sick. It is not the sacrament of the dying, because the grace it confers, according to St James interpreted by Trent, does not only regard the moment of dying but also and perhaps even more, the preparation to that moment during the illness which is eventually to lead to it. It is not the sacrament of the sick, if by sickness we mean the state of bodily debility and of spiritual incapacity without any reference to its eventual outcome, death, but rather with a view to its effective removal: because its sacramental grace of spiritual strength, a help no doubt for the present corporal and spiritual weakness, is particularly meant for the great spiritual struggle which approaching death usually entails.

Accordingly, by combining the positive elements of each of the two positions their one-sidedness will be remedied. Extreme Unction is the sacrament of the sick in danger of death (p. 262).

Does Fr de Letter really succeed in having it both ways? No; it becomes clear to anyone who considers his article closely that he has not brought together the two alternatives but has taken his choice between them. Whatever his protestations, for him, without a doubt, this sacrament is a sacrament of the dying not of the sick as sick. "To enable a sick man, in spite of weakness and spiritual danger, safely to go through the ordeal of the last struggle of this earthly life, such is the specific sacramental grace of Extreme Unction" (p. 269). Death envisaged as the outcome

of the illness is made essential to the meaning of the sacrament; the sickness only comes within its scope in so far as it is a preamble to death. Plainly, the purpose given to the anointing is not to help and strengthen the sick in their sickness, but to assist the dying in their death. It is concerned with sickness, not as a hindrance to normal activity, but as the antechamber of death. The person is reached by the sacrament precisely and formally as dying, not as sick. In a word, it is not seen as the sacrament of the sick in danger of death, but as the sacrament of the departing when they are dying from sickness.

Before we pass to the writings of those who regard this conception as untraditional and unsatisfactory, let us acknowledge its nobility. A very attractive presentation of it can be found in the *Katholische Dogmatik* of Professor Schmaus.<sup>1</sup> His whole treatment of this sacrament is brought under the idea that it is the consecration of death. He speaks in excellent terms of the meaning of death and its significance for the union of the Christian with Christ. The death of the baptized is already as such the death of those united to the crucified and risen Christ, but the sacramental order includes a further gift. The sacrament of extreme unction unites the dying Christian in an even deeper way to the death of Christ. When the author comes to discuss in detail the various effects of anointing, all that is said is governed by the conviction that the purpose of this sacrament is to make the death of the anointed a participation in the death of Christ. The possibility of a bodily healing is dealt with at the end of the section on the effects. Even here, preparation for death is seen as the ruling purpose. When the salvation of the person calls for the postponement of death, the sacrament will bring about a recovery. The anointing is still an anointing for death, but in this instance for a good but postponed death. The reader is left with the marked impression that no effort has been spared to bring this sacrament in its total meaning under the heading of a sacramental consecration of death.

While one cannot but admire the thought of Professor Schmaus on the deep significance of Christian death and the encounter with Christ it brings, there is some cause for wondering whether he has not attached his reflexions to the wrong

<sup>1</sup> *Katholische Dogmatik*, IV, 1 (München, 1957), pp. 614-35.

sacrament. To judge from the liturgy, the sacrament of a Christian death is not anointing but viaticum. All that is said about death for the Christian goes admirably with the Eucharist in this its final role. It does not go so well with anointing, which is refused to Christians faced with even certain death, if the death is not from sickness. On this point, it is somewhat piquant to observe that Professor Schmaus, in dealing with the meaning and effects of the sacrament, quotes extensively from the commendation of a departing soul, but does not cite the prayers that immediately follow the anointing. These, it will be remembered, ask for a recovery. This prompts the reflexion how misleading is the place of viaticum in our present ritual. Up to the close of the twelfth century, the order of the last sacraments was anointing and then viaticum. That gave to viaticum its full significance as the Church's parting gift, with the commendation of the dying as its complement. Then the order was changed and viaticum yielded to anointing its position as the final climax of the Church's sacramental ministrations to the dying Christian. Anointing took on the appearance of the final preparation for death. That is still the order in the Roman Ritual; but not now in the new vernacular rituals approved by Rome. The American, the French (revised edition) and the German rituals restore the older order and viaticum follows the anointing. The significance of this return to the older tradition is not reflected in Professor Schmaus's account.

Our busy pastor, who is probably rather worried by now, could draw from Professor Schmaus material for a moving and yet deeply doctrinal sermon on Christian death. He could present extreme unction as the sacrament of such a death and put it before the faithful as a wonderful gift which the Church can give her children when they come to die. Would not many priests, however, hesitate to adopt this approach in the same exclusive way as Professor Schmaus? When attempts are made from time to time to persuade people not to delay this sacrament, these frequently use the possible bodily effects as a motive. This fact keeps alive in the minds of priests an awareness that there is another side to the sacrament. They would feel vaguely uncomfortable at making it so exclusively a sacrament of death. Besides, they would fear that the inherent logic of the view

would encourage people in delaying the sacrament until death was imminent; and, despite the urging of these authors that the sacrament should be received at an early stage, the past history of this opinion and its influence amply supports such fears. What then is our pastor to do? Talk equally of death and recovery, and leave people in the usual mental fog about what this sacrament is really intended to do? As Dom Botte vividly puts it, the average compromise account of the sacrament reminds one of a request to sit between two chairs.

It is time to turn to the other recent attempt to restore this sacrament to its proper place in the sacramental life of the faithful. Another book that a priest might very well turn to in search for enlightenment is Fr Roguet's *The Sacraments; Signs of Life*.<sup>1</sup> The anointing of the sick is dealt with in a vigorous chapter that strikes a new note.

Extreme Unction, in spite of its name, is not exclusively, or even principally, the sacrament of the dying. Afterwards we shall see what are the helps which the Church reserves for people on their death-bed. For the moment, let us content ourselves with seeing Extreme Unction as the sacrament of the sick. And this is the reason—let us make the point once and for all—why we ought to drop the term 'Extreme Unction', which is unsuitable and relatively modern, in favour of the more accurate and more traditional "anointing of the sick" (p. 101).

The meaning of the sacrament is explained in an exposition that begins with the attitude of Christ to the sick and infers from James that the primary effect of the sacrament is the physical cure of the sick. We are told that the mediaeval theologians burked this truth because they wondered how a sacrament could have a physical effect. But this hesitation is due to a misunderstanding. The sacraments are aimed at man as a single whole made up of body and soul, and sickness has spiritual repercussions. Anointing is then compared with viaticum, which is in truth the sacrament for death. However, the author at the end briefly indicates the role of extreme unction when it has to act as a sacrament of the dying.

A remarkable piece of work this chapter, but disappointingly

<sup>1</sup> London, 1954.

brief for those to whom the approach is new and who are therefore avid for more detailed support and information. Another and brilliant presentation of the sacrament along the same lines (Fr Roguet is a co-author) is given in the *Album liturgique* which the periodical *Fêtes et Saisons* has prepared on the sacrament of the sick.<sup>1</sup> Many know by now the format and technique of illustration used by this outstanding series. The doctrinal content of this album corresponds to Fr Roguet's chapter. The sacrament is presented unhesitatingly as a sacrament of healing, with the fact that the sick are not always delivered from their sickness explained in reference to the present economy of salvation. Yet all partisan shrillness is avoided, and everyone, whatever his theological opinions, can profit from the rich and skilful exposition. What is also of interest is to learn from the album that there is in France *La Ligue de saint Jacques Apôtre* with the purpose of making this sacrament in the common estimation the sacrament of the sick, instituted with a view to recovery not death.

We have undoubtedly encountered here a new trend of some significance. It is not confined to France. Dr Rudolf Peil, expressly opposing Professor Schmaus, insists with marked emphasis in his liturgical handbook for the catechist and teacher that this is the sacrament of the sick not the sacrament of death.<sup>2</sup> The same view is taken as correct in a short article in the *Liturgisches Jahrbuch*,<sup>3</sup> where the references to other writers make it clear that the opinion has gained some currency in German catechetical circles. Its influence is not surprising. Few can fail to find this approach to the sacrament attractive, and there is hardly need to mention how rich it is in pastoral possibilities. It has also the right ring about it, whereas the Kern-Howell opinion seemed reminiscent of the wrong kind of piety. But how does it stand in the theological world? Has it solid backing?

A justification of the approach is given by the liturgical scholar, Dom Bernard Botte, in *La Maison-Dieu*.<sup>4</sup> His article is

<sup>1</sup> *Le sacrament des malades*, Paris, 1957.

<sup>2</sup> *Handbuch der Liturgik für Katecheten und Lehrer*, Freiburg, 1955, pp. 151-5.

<sup>3</sup> Heinrich Spaemann, "Die rechtzeitige Spendung der heiligen Krankensalbung", *Liturgisches Jahrbuch*, herausgegeben vom Liturgischen Institut, 8 (1958), pp. 147-9.

<sup>4</sup> "L'onction des malades", *La Maison-Dieu*, n. 15 (1948), pp. 91-107.



an appeal to tradition. All the liturgical evidence up to the twelfth century shows that this sacrament was regarded as a sacrament of the sick, directed to the healing of the sick person, although not to the exclusion of spiritual effects. Then came the theological speculations of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries which led to the bodily effects being pushed right into the background. The anointing of the sick became a sacrament of the dying, indeed of the agony. How could the principal effect be bodily healing? the scholastics asked; the effect of a sacrament must be a grace. Their systematization of sacramentary theology caused a distortion in the attitude to this sacrament. But the Holy Spirit was still with the Church, as is clear from what happened at Trent. The Council was presented with a draft text which was a sanction pure and simple of the idea that this sacrament was the sacrament of the agony and in which any normal effect of the anointing on the health of the sick person was excluded. This text was rejected and another adopted which, while stressing the important role of the anointing for the dying, left its wider efficacy intact. Hence the possibility of a renewed understanding of its function as the sacrament of the sick. Dom Botte also argues from the attitude of the Holy See to the practice of the Eastern Church that the danger-of-death requirement in the Latin Church is a disciplinary matter. He then draws some practical conclusions, all directed to the purpose of giving back to this sacrament its true character as the sacrament, not of the agony, but of the sick. Among them is a forcibly worded request for the dropping of the name *extreme unction* and the use instead of the older title *anointing of the sick*.

Dom Botte's article is informative and stimulating, but not altogether satisfactory. This is due principally to his intemperate tone. A theologian does not like to rush his fences and he jibs when people try to make him do so. No doubt some such reaction provoked the article of Fr Leurent, *Le magistère et le mot "Extrême-Onction" depuis le Concile de Trente*.<sup>1</sup> The Jesuit writer leaves the major problem aside and confines his attention to the question of title. He takes up the remarks of Dom Botte and others, who have directed severe criticisms against the more

<sup>1</sup> *Problemi scelti di teologia contemporanea. Analecta Gregoriana*, 68, Romae, 1954, pp. 219-32.

usual name *extreme unction*, and asks how far it is permissible to reject it or ignore it. The most useful part of the article consists in some interesting titbits about Trent, drawn from the recently published Acts of the Bologna interlude. But all that emerges is that the Council chose the title *extreme unction* with deliberation. No decisive doctrinal reason seems to have been involved, and use was made at the same time of other titles, including *anointing of the sick*. What becomes clear in passing is that as yet we are badly informed about the relevant fourteenth session of Trent; for more information we have to wait for the publication of further volumes of the Acts by the *Görresgesellschaft*. From Trent the author turns to the later usage by the *magisterium*. What strikes the attention here is the great reticence of recent popes over the name *extreme unction* and their preference for other titles. It remains, however, the term used in canon law. A glance is then taken at the practice of the French bishops.

What results from all this investigation? With one conclusion that the author draws there ought to be agreement: the use of *extreme unction* by Trent and other documents compels one to treat it with respect. Some of the critical remarks that have been directed against it have been regrettably excessive. It is always wise in theological matters to be wary of negative attacks; theology usually advances by widening the point of view and introducing complementary aspects, rarely by mere destruction. At the same time, Fr Leurent goes too far and tries to prove too much. He admits that the term has not the solemn approval given to *transubstantiation*; he admits too the reserve of recent popes and the free use made by the Church of other titles for this sacrament; he rightly concludes that in his general pastoral work a priest is quite free to give his preference to *anointing of the sick*; but he makes the reservation that *extreme unction* must retain the first place in catechetics. As regards at least this last point I find myself at one with the Dominican scholar, Fr Gy, who for his part dismisses the author's whole vindication as unconvincing.<sup>1</sup> Nothing in the data adduced by Fr Leurent justifies his contention. It is perfectly possible to treat the term *extreme unction* with respect as expressing one aspect of this sacrament, its significant role in the last sickness,

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 39 (1955), p. 688.

and yet to recognize that this aspect has received too exclusive a stress and to regard the name *anointing of the sick* as entirely preferable, since it expresses in a fuller and more balanced way the meaning of the sacrament. A return to this title has been made in the new German catechism and in the German diocesan prayer-books. To work and hope that this should happen in other countries seems entirely legitimate. A lesser aspiration for this country, which is merely a matter of euphony and linguistics, has yet to be fulfilled: the ousting of the ugly transliteration *extreme unction* by the English *last anointing*.

Fr Laurent confined his attention to words. Can we find anything to second Dom Botte's historical and doctrinal observations? Yes; *Theological Studies* has recently published an important article by the Jesuit, Fr Palmer, which confirms what Dom Botte had maintained.<sup>1</sup> It is pitched, however, in a lower key, and so is less likely to disturb those whose pious ears are highly sensitive. The author starts with a statement of Kern's view and goes on to say that his aim is to question the basic premise on which it rests: namely, that the purpose of extreme unction is to prepare the soul for immediate entry into heaven. He grants that such was the purpose accepted, despite their differences, by the great scholastic doctors, but does it truly represent the older tradition of the Church? His investigations begin with the text of James and go through the various documents on this sacrament. What he finds up to the Carolingian period is summed up in this way:

Up until the period of the Carolingian reform, which begins at the close of the eighth century, there is no certain evidence either in the liturgies or the writings of ecclesiastical authors that the sacrament of unction was ever regarded as a preparation for death or that the rite of anointing formed part of the Church's last rites for the dying (p. 321).

During the Carolingian reform, the anointing of the sick became a normal complement to penance and viaticum in the rites for the dying, its administration however preceding viaticum. Yet

<sup>1</sup> "The Purpose of Anointing the Sick: A Reappraisal", *Theological Studies*, 19 (1958), pp. 309-44.

the earlier emphasis on anointing as a remedy for restoring health was not thereby lost, and the ritual of anointing that has come down to us from that period, the earliest full ritual we have and an ancestor of our present rite, contains no reference to death and leaves the definite impression that anointing is the sacrament of the sick and is not primarily concerned with the dying.

It was the middle of the twelfth century that saw this sacrament receive the name *extreme unction* and become the last sacrament, the final preparation of the person for glory. By the end of the century the last anointing had ousted viaticum from its final and climactic position in the rites for the dying. Fr Palmer traces the change of attitude in the early scholastic period, when the context was established in which the debates of the great scholastics took place. The writers of the thirteenth century considered this sacrament simply as the sacrament of the dying. That is why they all agreed that its purpose was to prepare the soul for glory, although they divided into two main schools in determining this effect more precisely. What many readers of his article will find quite startling is the logical conclusion which the scholastics themselves drew from this view of the sacrament: they insist that it is only to be received when death is imminent, when the recipient is in fact departing from this life and passing to another state. Here indeed is a sacrament of the agony.

Against this background the decree of Trent is altogether remarkable. The author briefly discusses what the Council declared and—what perhaps is more significant—what it did not. Also worthy of note is the attitude of the Catechism of the Council of Trent with its unexpected inculcation of confidence in the efficacy of this sacrament for a recovery of health. Fr Palmer's judgement on the post-Tridentine period is very enlightening. The mediaeval outlook has been gradually modified. What was regarded as the sacrament of the departing has very slowly come to be understood as the sacrament of the seriously sick. That is the real reason why the anointing-for-glory idea which Kern tried to revive fell into abeyance. The interpretation of the danger of death required for anointing became much wider and the view prevailed that it need not be

proximate but remote. Some now even maintain that a probable judgement of danger of death is enough for validity and lawfulness, even if an objective and real danger is not actually present. This is equivalent to saying that the actual degree of sickness does not affect the validity of the sacrament, although a prudent judgement of danger of death on the part of the priest is necessary for lawfulness. And Fr Palmer argues that this means in effect that the prescription of canon law about the requirement of danger of death is not a doctrinal demand affecting the validity, but a disciplinary measure controlling the lawfulness of anointing in the Latin Church. This, he remarks, helps us to understand the history of the sacrament and also explains the attitude of Rome to the Eastern Church. He thus makes the same judgement as Dom Botte, though he reaches it in a different way.

Fr Palmer's conclusion is the rejection of Kern's view. The chief fruit of his article is the conviction, solidly established, that anointing is the sacrament of the sick. For that we must be grateful.

The busy priest who has consented to come on this theological tour can rightly feel that he has now the answer to the key question with which we began. Anointing is the sacrament of the sick. There is indeed the last sickness. No excessive reaction should make us forget that this sacrament has a particularly important role to play at that critical time; but even then it is concerned with the sickness rather with death. We may then safely and comprehensively present it as the sacrament of the sick. But this has not yet solved all the difficulties involved in conveying plainly the meaning of this sacrament. How are we to describe its effects? To make its main effect the recovery of the sick person, his physical cure, seems, let us admit it, an exaggeration. No one would wish to be lacking in faith, but all save the most robust of the clergy get chary about raising false hopes. There is in any case something inherently awkward about presenting vigorously an effect that might not take place. After all, the scholastic search for an infallible sacramental grace connected with the supernatural life was not unjustified. The question remains: what precisely does this sacrament do for the sick?

The book of Fr Roguet and the album of *Fêtes et Saisons* give useful hints on the presentation of this sacrament, but the treatment of the effects does not entirely satisfy. We have reason then to thank Fr Alszeghy for grasping this theological nettle firmly. His article in the *Gregorianum* is an outstanding contribution to a difficult question.<sup>1</sup> He sets himself the task of determining the bodily effects of this sacrament. The problem is clear: it is grace the sacraments cause but the sources seem to indicate that the effect of this sacrament is health of body. How are these points to be reconciled? What exactly is the bodily effect of anointing?

He first examines the sources on the subject of the bodily effect. As will no longer surprise us, the conclusion emerges that there is a decided difference between the ancient texts and recent theology. The former express an optimistic attitude towards bodily healing as an effect of the anointing, the latter timidly includes a very conditional expectation. The author turns then to the question of the spiritual grace given by this sacrament. Even the early sources make it clear that the sacrament also produces a spiritual effect. Quite apart from the remission of sins that is given if needed, the anointing is intended as a spiritual aid to the soul. Fr Alszeghy insists on the presence of this aspect in the documentary evidence on this sacrament. He thus corrects the one-sided interpretation of the early tradition found in some writers. The anointing of the sick was never directed solely to a bodily healing. Its spiritual effects were recognized from the beginning and their existence became at Trent a dogma of faith.

What is the relationship between these two sides of the efficacy of anointing? That is the next problem tackled by the author. Are they two parallel effects? In the sources when the effects of this sacrament are being prayed for or described, it is often impossible to distinguish what refers to the soul and what refers to the body. Is this due to a confusion, to an unfortunate lack of clarity? To think in that way is to fall into the error attributed to Descartes and destroy the unity of man. Our concept of a living man is not a confusion due to a failure to

<sup>1</sup> "L'effetto corporale dell'Estrema Unzione", *Gregorianum*, 38 (1957), pp. 385-405.

distinguish clearly soul and body. In reality what exists is man; and in man as a biological and spiritual unity the anatomical, physiological, psychological and spiritual aspects exist in continuous relation and mutual interaction, so that to speak of one of these alone is to make an abstraction. Such an abstraction will always be partial, since during life we can never completely distinguish spiritual and bodily life. Man is not a body nor a soul nor a confusion of both; man is a corporal and spiritual unity. Such is man, such likewise is therefore the help given to aid man in sickness. What is given by this sacrament is a grace that affects man as a whole. In the "salvation" given to the sick man there is a unity between the bodily and spiritual aspects. Why should this seem strange to us? It is in keeping with sacramental efficacy in general. When the priest administers the sacraments, he is concerned with man as a whole, man as a psycho-somatic unity or totality, and the efficacy of the sacraments affects both body and soul. The anointing of the sick does not then exercise an influence on the soul considered apart from the body nor on the body considered apart from the soul, but on the living unity which is the whole person. That is the way we must think of the anointing as helping the sick person.

Nevertheless, this does not prevent us from distinguishing the spiritual and bodily aspects of the sacramental influence and trying to find out all that is involved. The help which this sacrament gives to the sick man can be taken to mean in general that his spiritual and corporal faculties are influenced in order to offset the sickness and give him freedom of action. The problem of the bodily side of this is that, while the sources maintain that such an effect is produced, a clinical or medical cure is exceptional. It is the author's contention that this apparent contradiction is to be avoided by seeking a bodily benefit given to the sick person but distinct in itself from a clinical cure. How does he do this?

The effect of this sacrament is a strengthening of the whole person. What are the needs of a sick person? There results from sickness a weakness, an unfitness, a lack of vigour in regard to the supernatural life. This is a spiritual matter, but it is also bound up with the physiological state of the person. If we place in a wider theological context the harmful repercussions of



sickness on the supernatural life, we see them as due to the loss of original integrity. The difficulty caused by sickness is another example of the weighing down of the will by bodily factors and comes under concupiscence, if this is understood in a wider sense than is usual. The sacramental grace of anointing is a remedy against this. It restores to the sick man the force to live the supernatural life and thereby gives him back part of original integrity. Such a restoration affects the person as a whole and has repercussions throughout his faculties, both spiritual and corporal.

What then is the grace of the anointing of the sick? It is a help granted to the person to live intensely his supernatural life, despite the special difficulty of sickness. This grace has a spiritual aspect, which is summarized in the declaration of Trent. Its bodily aspect can be described as a comfort or relief given to the body in order that it should no longer impede the soul; a help, namely, which partially restores order between the various faculties in regard to the total finality of the person. In some instances such a restoration of order will result in a clinical cure; in other instances such a healing will be required as the condition of that restoration. If a clinical healing is involved in either way in the grace of this sacrament, it will be given by the anointing. There will, however, be some instances where no advantage for the medical health of the person will be implied in the restoration and strengthening given by the sacrament. Fr Alszeqhy, in stating that such cases are certainly more numerous and in assuming that in these cases the recipient will die, is accepting too readily a very restricted use of this sacrament. However, we may without difficulty endorse his final remarks on the relevance of the sacramental grace, as he has analysed it, for the last sickness and the agony.

We have come to the end of our tour of the theological world and it is now necessary to state as plainly and simply as possible what we have discovered concerning this sacrament. One point at least is clear. This is the sacrament of sickness not of death. There is a last sickness, and the sacramental grace of anointing has an especial significance when given to those who in the midst of sickness and by means of it have to prepare themselves for a Christian death and make their death a per-

sonal and Christian act. Nevertheless, the anointing is still given to them because they are sick, and not precisely because they are facing death. The sacrament of Christian death is viaticum, with the other prayers and rites that the Church herself has added for the help of the dying. It is true that anointing can only be given to those who are in danger of death, but this is interpreted generously by moralists and canonists today. The requirement is a way of controlling the administration of the sacrament, limiting its use to those who are seriously ill. The import of it seems to be disciplinary rather than doctrinal. Certainly, the anointing, according to approved present-day casuistry, may and should be given to those whose recovery we hope for with a natural confidence and pray for without asking for the miraculous. There is no obstacle to a frank recognition that this sacrament is the sacrament of the sick, and the recent work on this subject enables us to embrace this conclusion without fear.

At the same time, it would be a mistake to proclaim a physical cure as the principal effect of this sacrament and to try to make it a rite of healing in the medical sense. Apart from the obvious impossibility of offering such healing as an infallible effect, this attitude would not do justice to the full significance of this sacrament. The spiritual side of the efficacy of anointing has always been acknowledged, and it may be taken for granted from general principles that any bodily effects must be subordinated to the recipient's supernatural life, with which all the sacraments are concerned. Consequently, the sacramental grace of this sacrament can best be seen as strength and relief given to the sick person to live a full supernatural life, despite his sickness. This grace is given to man as a living unity of body and soul and has repercussions, spiritual and bodily, throughout the whole person. On the bodily side, it implies a restoration of order and unity that might—and often does—involve a cure in the medical sense. We know enough nowadays on the one hand about the complicated causality behind sickness and on the other hand about its repercussions on the various levels of a man's life not to be surprised at this. But sickness has a multiple role in this present order of salvation, and God's sacramental grace to the sick man may have varying results. It may be given

for a short, severe sickness, where the relief given by the sacrament is striking in its effects. Yet God's will may be a prolonged sickness, where the effect of the sacrament may be an intense supernatural life in a person whom the natural weight of illness would otherwise have wearied and weakened into inertia. Finally, the sickness may be the preamble to death, where the ability, sacramentally given, to rise above the burden of bodily break-up may enable the person to crown a life of virtue with a new intensity of love or rectify a life of vice by a lovingly endured expiation. To postpone the sacrament to the end of the last sickness is to deprive the person of a much-needed sacramental aid, and partially to frustrate the purpose of the sacrament. In brief, the sacrament of anointing is intended to help our Christian life in all the difficulties and problems caused by sickness.

What a wonderful gift of God! Yet what a cloud of misunderstanding and fear surrounds it! Much can be and is being done, especially in France and Germany, to restore a true appreciation of this sacrament. But perhaps, as a French writer remarks,<sup>1</sup> only an initiative from the Holy See similar to the initiative taken by St Pius X in regard to frequent communion will give this sacrament once again its full place in the Christian life.

CHARLES DAVIS

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### THE SILENT *Pater Noster*

In the public recitation of the Divine Office why is it that only the opening and closing words of *Pater noster* are said aloud? (D. M. N.)

### REPLY

According to the present rubrics in the choral recitation of the Office *Pater noster* is said (i) entirely silently (*secreto*) in

<sup>1</sup> F. Meurant, "L'extrême-onction est-elle le sacrement de la dernière maladie?", *La vie spirituelle*, mars 1955, pp. 242-51.

Compline and at Matins of the Dead and of the *Triduum Sacrum* (Tenebrae); (ii) entirely aloud at the ferial *preces* of Lauds and Vespers<sup>1</sup> (now recited in a Ferial Office only on the Wednesdays and Fridays of Advent and Lent, and on Ember days, except those of Pentecost week); (iii) with the opening words (the intonation) and the closing words (the ecphonesis) alone said aloud: (a) before each Lesson at Matins (except Matins of the dead and Tenebrae), (b) at Prime, in the second part (the capitular part), (c) after the Litanies of the Saints. Outside the Office the *Pater noster* is recited in this way in the Absolution of the Dead and in some of the more solemn blessings; while it is collectively recited entirely aloud at Baptism and in the new rites of Good Friday (before Communion) and the Easter Vigil (at the renewal of the baptismal promises).

Originally in the Office the *Pater noster* was not said aloud fully, and St Benedict (+ c. 550) remarks (*Regula*, cap. XIII) that the monastic usage of reciting it aloud in full in Lauds and Vespers—a usage which afterwards passed into the Roman non-monastic rite also—was an exception, to allow the brethren to hear one another seeking pardon for their faults against each other and ask pardon (*et dimitte nobis*, etc.). Many symbolical reasons have been adduced for the silent recital of the Lord's Prayer, none of them—it would seem—of any great value. The real reason is historical, the prayer was subject to the *disciplina arcani*, which came into effect in the third century, reached its apogee in the fourth and fifth, and gradually disappeared after that. The text of the *Pater noster* was kept secret from those not members of the Church, it was forbidden to write it down, it had to be memorized and handed on verbally. One of the highlights of the catechumenate was the *traditio* of this prayer to the catechumens (the *electi*) on the Wednesday of the fourth week in Lent in a great ceremony at St Paul's basilica in Rome. The catechumens—and the faithful—were to guard the *Pater noster* as a sacred treasure, not to be exposed to the danger of profanation by being made known to those who were not of the household of the faith.<sup>2</sup> And so at the services open to the pagans, out

<sup>1</sup> In a non-monastic Office of the Roman rite. The monastic Office (e.g. of the Benedictines) has *Preces* at the end of other Hours also.

<sup>2</sup> The Creed was also subject to the discipline of the secret.

of respect only the first and last words were pronounced aloud so that those taking part would know when to recite the prayer silently and make answer at its close.

### BOWING HEAD AT MEMENTO DEFUNCTORUM

Why does the celebrant at Mass bow his head at the conclusion of the prayer for the dead? (X.)

### REPLY

This is one of the enigmas of rubrical history. Both a rubric of the *Ritus Servandus* of the Missal (ix, 2) and of the Canon direct the celebrant to bow while saying the words *per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum* at the conclusion of the remembrance of the dead. It is the only time in the Mass when a bow of the head is ordered at the word *Christum* not accompanied by the personal name of our Lord, *Jesus* (then the bow is ordered by *Ritus* V, 2). The rubric is of comparatively late arrival in the *Ritus*, and later still in the Canon. None of the mediaeval liturgists speak of this bow. The rubric does not appear in the Roman Missals of the fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries (e.g. it is not in the first printed Roman Missal, 1474), nor is it in the Ambrosian, Dominican or Carthusian rites even now. It does not occur in the *Ordo Missae* of Burchard (1502) from which most of our present *Ritus Servandus* is taken. Most remarkable of all, it is not in the first editions (of either Rome or Venice) of the first official Roman Missal, that issued by St Pius V in 1570. It makes its first appearance, apparently, in the editions of this Pianine Missal of 1571 (both in the Roman and Paris editions), in the *Ritus*. Only in the edition of Urban VIII in 1634 does it occur in the Canon.

The researches of Dom Michel Daras of the Benedictine Abbey of Mont César of Louvain—undertaken at the instance of Dom Louis Brou, the erudite liturgist of Quarr Abbey, Isle of Wight, when he was studying the question—brought to light the fact that the famous rubric was added to the *Ritus* by

Cardinal Antony Caraffa (1538-91) when, by order of St Pius V, he made in 1570-71 a number of corrections in the newly published official Missal of 1570. We may safely conjecture that the Cardinal must have had some good reason for doing this, and the reason seems to be that he was merely officially embodying in the Missal a rubric confirming an existing usage—it was, evidently, the established practice then to make this bow at these words, but why?

Several explanations have been suggested—a sign that the real explanation is uncertain—mostly allegorical, e.g. (a) that the head is bowed as a gesture of humility in preparation for the prayer that is to follow, *Nobis quoque peccatoribus* (this is the tentative explanation of the great liturgist Gavanti, in 1628); (b) the bow is induced by the word *deprecamur*,<sup>1</sup> as a bow is prescribed by the words *suscipe deprecationem nostram* in *Gloria in excelsis* (this is de Vert's idea in his *Explication* of the Mass, 1713); (c) the bow is made at *Christum* since the prayer is "pro omnibus in *Christo* quiescentibus" (so Quarti in 1727); (d) the bow recalls that of his head made by our Lord on the cross just before his death, after which he went to limbo to bring solace to the dead (this is Gihl's explanation); (e) the bow was a sign to the ministers attending the celebrant that they had to bow at the following words *Nobis quoque* (so Brinktrine, 1931). None of these so-called explanations is satisfactory.

By far the best treatment of this rubrical puzzle is found in an article contributed by Dom Louis Brou to *Miscellanea Liturgica* published in 1948 in honour of the distinguished liturgist Dom Cunibert Mohlberg. Dom Brou brings forward documentary evidence to show that the bow of the head at *Christum* in the *Memento Mortuorum* is not an isolated instance but, possibly, the sole survivor of a much wider use. He gives evidence of a similar rubric for the words *Per Christum Dominum nostrum* of the Preface in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and points to the same bow at the conclusion (*Per eundem Christum . . .*) of the *Communicantes* in the Dominican Liturgy, and at the end of the remembrance of the living in the Carthusian rite since the sixteenth century. It is possible then that it

<sup>1</sup> But the bow is ordered for the words "Per eundem . . ." and the 1920 typical edition of the Missal added *dicens* just before these words in the rubric of the Canon.

was the mediaeval usage to bow the head at *Christum* whenever it occurred in the little doxology that concludes prayers in the Canon (including the Preface). That practice may have arisen from the habit of bowing in the long conclusion of prayers—used exclusively in the prayers of the Mass except in the Order and Canon (where the short conclusion was already established before the longer conclusion was introduced, probably in the sixth century, for other prayers of the Mass)—where the name *Jesus*<sup>1</sup> often occurs.

Fr Jungmann, s.J.,<sup>2</sup> while taking note of Dom Brou's theory, thinks the bow arose from the mediaeval practice of adding gestures expressive of the actions of our Lord in the rite of the Mass.

We should rather seek our explanation [he writes], in the allegorical treatment of the Mass liturgy, the same sort of thinking that led the later Middle Ages to give a symbolical representation of the Crucified by means of the outstretched arms after the consecration,<sup>3</sup> and the crossed hands at the *Supplices*. Towards the end of the Canon some externalization had to be made of the moment when the dying Redeemer bowed his head.

#### CLOTHING CORPSE OF A PRIEST

Should the dead body of a priest be clothed for burial in black or in violet vestments? (Canonicus.)

#### REPLY

The Roman Ritual in its *Praenotanda de Exsequiis* (title VII), directs that "as far as possible"—these words were added in the 1925 edition of the Ritual and are in the current edition, 1952—a cleric is to be vested after death in the sacred vesture proper to his order (VII, i, 12). For a priest this is: cassock, amice, alb, cincture, maniple, stole and chasuble of violet colour (n. 13). A

<sup>1</sup> To bow at the holy Name became the rule about the thirteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, II.

<sup>3</sup> As in the Carmelite rite.



query was sent by the archbishop of Compostella (Spain) to S.R.C. in 1908 asking if black may be used in clothing the corpse of a priest because of a general custom of doing this in his diocese. The Congregation replied (4228): "Yes, especially in view of the custom and the rubric of the Roman Ritual, which in prescribing violet vestments *in casu* does not exclude black." However, in the editions of the Roman Ritual of 1913, 1925 and 1952 no change has been made in the rubric ordering violet vestments. For the corpse of a bishop a rubric of *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* (II, xxxviii, 10) orders violet vestments.

### COLOUR FOR BENEDICTION

If Benediction follows Mass may it be given in the Mass vestments (without the maniple) of any colour? Must the colour of the tabernacle veil be always white for Benediction? (J. P.)

### REPLY

While a priest may expose the Blessed Sacrament immediately after Mass in the Mass vestments whatever their colour (except black—S.R.C. 1744), if he is to give Benediction with the monstrance he must remove his chasuble and maniple and don a cope. (S.R.C. 2047<sup>1</sup>, 3039<sup>4</sup>, 3319, 3697,<sup>12</sup> 3764<sup>8</sup>). This may be of the colour of the vestments if he does not quit the sanctuary. If he does, Benediction becomes a separate function and the colour should then be white (cf. S.R.C. 1615<sup>6</sup>, 3075<sup>3</sup>, 3949<sup>7</sup>). The colour of the conopaeum may be always white, being the liturgical colour of the Blessed Sacrament; or, better still, it may be of the colour of the altar frontal (S.R.C. 3035<sup>10</sup> and 9 December 1947). If this be not white it is not necessary to change it or the conopaeum for Benediction, which involves exposition for only a short time (S.R.C. 3559). For a long exposition the colour of the conopaeum and frontal is white. At Benediction whatever the colour of the cope that of the humeral veil is always white (S.R.C. 2562).

## THE SAPIENTIAL BOOKS

The title to the Epistle of several Masses in the Missal is *Lectio Libri Sapientiae*. How much of the Old Testament is comprised under this heading? (X.)

## REPLY

This title is used for longer citations—Epistles and Lessons—in the Missal to cover extracts from the five books of the Old Testament called the Sapiential Books, i.e. the Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, the Book of Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus. There does not seem to be any such longer citation from Ecclesiastes in the Missal. Shorter citations used in Introits, Graduals, etc., appear under the names of the books to which they belong. Of course, under the title *Lectio Libri Sapientiae*, for the longer pericopes, the exact reference is also given.

J. B. O'C.

## THE DAILY PIOUS PRACTICES OF THE CLERGY

The Church prescribes for clerics the daily practice of meditation, visit to the Blessed Sacrament, Rosary and examination of conscience. How far are these daily practices obligatory? (M. R.)

## REPLY

Canon 125: "Curent locorum Ordinarii:

1°. "Ut clerici omnes poenitentiae sacramento frequenter conscientiae maculas eluant";

2°. "Ut iidem quotidie orationi mentali per aliquod tempus incumbant, sanctissimum Sacramentum visitent, Deiparam Virginem mariano rosario colant, conscientiam suam discutiant."

As is clear from the wording of this canon, the common law does not directly bind the clergy to the observance of these

practices. It merely calls upon local Ordinaries to see to it that they are observed. In virtue of this charge, there is nothing to prevent a local Ordinary from binding his clergy to them by diocesan statute, if he judges that a statutory obligation is required for the common good; but usually diocesan statutes on these matters are couched in hortative terms, and Regatillo considers that this is preferable to imposing precepts and sanctions.<sup>1</sup> Except therefore in the unlikely event of a diocesan or provincial precept, a cleric violates no obligation of positive law, even if he habitually fails to observe any of these practices.

But positive law does not mark the limit of moral obligation. One must remember that, though the attainment of spiritual perfection is not obligatory, the quest of it is. Commenting on our Lord's imperative words: "Be ye therefore perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect,"<sup>2</sup> Pope Pius XI declared: "Let no one think that these words apply to a few very select souls, and that the rest are free to remain in some lower degree of virtue; for it is clear that all without exception are bound by this law."<sup>3</sup> Moreover, clerics in particular are bound "sanctiorem prae laicis vitam interiorem et exteriorem ducere eisque virtute et recte factis in exemplum excellere".<sup>4</sup> It is precisely to this end, as the late Pope Pius XII emphasized, that "the Church earnestly commends to us other exercises of piety besides the eucharistic sacrifice and the canonical hours".<sup>5</sup> Proceeding then to comment on the four exercises mentioned in canon 125, he says of meditation, in particular, that "its peculiar efficacy cannot be had in any other way, and therefore there cannot be any other substitute for its daily use".<sup>6</sup> Now, to be bound to the end is to be bound to the means. In so far, therefore, as these daily observances are necessary means to the effective pursuit of spiritual perfection in the clerical state, they must be said to be obligatory on clerics.<sup>7</sup>

At the very least, they are presented to us as urgent and insistent counsels; and though counsels, as such, do not bind

<sup>1</sup> *Instit. Iuris Canonici*, I, n. 240.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew v, 48.

<sup>3</sup> Encyclical *Rerum omnium*, 26 January 1923; *A.A.S.*, 1923, XV, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> Canon 124.

<sup>5</sup> *Menti Nostrae*, n. 45; *A.A.S.*, 1950, XLII, pp. 657 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Loc. cit., n. 48.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Regatillo, loc. cit.

under sin, it does not follow that a counsel can always be neglected without sin. Governing all our deliberate actions, commanded or free, stands the supreme moral law of reasonable action. If a counsel is neglected unreasonably, a sin is committed, not because the counsel is ignored, but because unreasonable conduct is morally wrong. One may well act reasonably in neglecting counsels which carry no special urgency in one's particular state of life or spiritual condition, but the more urgent a given counsel becomes, as an aid to spiritual progress or the avoidance of spiritual dangers, the less likely is its rejection to be reasonable. Prudence may justify a certain amount of restraint in asceticism, but spiritual sloth justifies nothing. It vitiates anything which it motivates, even the omission of acts which are not strictly obligatory. If, therefore, the omission of the daily practices earnestly recommended to us by the Church is due to spiritual sloth, it constitutes a moral fault which could indeed be grave, if the foreseen consequences were grave. As to whether the habitual neglect of these particular practices is in fact likely to have grave consequences, we are not competent to judge; but it is worth recalling that, in the judgement of the Holy Father, the neglect of meditation "gives rise to that spiritual weariness by which piety grows cold and languid, and, as a result of which, not only is one's personal impulse to sanctity interrupted or retarded, but even the works of one's sacred ministry suffer no small detriment".<sup>1</sup>

#### MASSES TO BE SAID BY NEWLY ORDAINED PRIESTS

How strict is the obligation of saying the three Masses imposed by the ordaining bishop on a newly ordained priest? Must they be votive Masses? Is there any time limit? For what intention are they to be offered? (A. O. D.)

#### REPLY

*Pontificale Romanum*, tit. *De Ordinatione Presbyteri*, in fine: "Ad Presbyteratum vero ordinati, post primam vestram Missam,

<sup>1</sup> *Menti Nostrae*, n. 48.

tres alias Missas, videlicet unam de Spiritu Sancto, aliam de beata Maria semper Virgine, tertiam pro Fidelibus defunctis dicite, et omnipotentem Deum etiam pro me orate."

(1) According to the common opinion, the obligation is not grave, "because the wording which the bishop uses does not indicate a grave obligation, nor do ecclesiastical legislators usually employ this very mild and quasi-hortative form when they intend to bind their subjects gravely".<sup>1</sup>

(2) Since the wording does not expressly stipulate that the Masses must be votive, one might equally argue that the obligation is substantially fulfilled by Masses said according to the Calendar, provided that they happen to be of the kind specified. But the more obvious meaning of the words indicates votive Masses, and the authoritative Dr Nabuco takes them as referring "ad celebrationem trium Missarum votivarum".<sup>2</sup> What is certain is that they are not privileged, because, according to a reply of the Congregation of Rites, 11 April 1840, they may not be said on lesser doubles, but only "in diebus a Rubrica permissis".<sup>3</sup>

(3) With this exception, no time-limit is specified. It is certainly not of obligation to say one or other of the Masses on the first three available occasions.

(4) Since the ordaining bishop merely prescribes the celebration and quality of the Masses and says nothing, either explicitly or implicitly, about the intention, the priest is free to apply them as he pleases.<sup>4</sup> Nabuco adds, however, that "it is laudable to say one of them for the intention of one's Ordinary or of the ordaining bishop".<sup>5</sup> One might detect an implicit request for at least a *memento* in the bishop's concluding words: "et omnipotentem Deum etiam pro me orate".

L. L. McR.

<sup>1</sup> Many, *Praelectiones de Sacra Ordinatione*, n. 310.

<sup>2</sup> *Pontificalis Romani Expositio Iuridico-Practica*, I, p. 226, n. 90.

<sup>3</sup> *D.A.*, n. 2802, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Many, loc. cit.

<sup>5</sup> Loc. cit.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*This is My Philosophy.* Edited by Whit Burnett. Pp. xix + 378.  
(George Allen and Unwin, London. 25s.)

WHAT the sum total may be of this score of essays and extracts from "twenty of the world's outstanding thinkers", as the editor presents them, in which they "reveal the deepest meanings they have found in life", I could make no possible guess. It might provide a neat exercise in addition *and* subtraction and the resulting total might not be very large. The book is, in certain respects, puzzling. Printed in Britain but with an American type, it has an American for editor, and every now and then this is not unpainfully obvious, as when he speaks of India as 'that vast and fecund land teetering in the neutral air between the East and West' or of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who contributes the concluding essay, as a "shuttler between Oxford and Benares". English proof-readers should have corrected a title like "Lord Bertrand Russell".

The editor confesses that the idea of such a symposium has been with him for several years, and its general theme is man's position in the world here and now, his capacities and future prospects. The word "thinker" he interprets very widely. His contributors include an architect, two nuclear physicists, a Christian missionary and medical man, two theologians, two or three men of letters and indeed few "philosophers" in any professional sense. At the broadest computation, only Russell (Britain), Sartre, Maritain and Marcel (France) and Jaspers (Germany) would be deemed philosophers, and purists might tilt a critical nose at the mention of Marcel and Sartre. Four are British, J. B. S. Haldane, Aldous Huxley and G. M. Trevelyan, together with Russell; five are American, including Reinhold Niebuhr, Lewis Mumford and Frank Lloyd Wright. In addition, there are Jung, de Madariaga, Ignazio Silone and others.

The main value of the book is that the essays are written from different viewpoints and may be said to give a general idea of how people actually think. A few are concerned with limited problems, such as Haldane on Evolution and Aldous Huxley on questions of world population. Others are analyses of twentieth-century society, like the admirable extracts chosen from Lewis Mumford, with his campaign against systems and specialization and his insistence on balance and the human person, or the essay of Marcel, which comes nearest to a statement of a personal position. The more definitely Christian contributions, e.g. those of Schweitzer, Niebuhr and Marcel are the most personal, the frankest in accepting impli-

cations and the most courageous. Sound sense and *joie de vivre* emerge from, let us say, Dr Hocking's essay, prefaced with this declaration: "I could sum up my life in four words—I have enjoyed living. I have found it a wonderful and holy thing. And . . . in the several lives lived abreast or rather braided. . . . I surely ought to put in somewhere the strand of fighting; for what is life without its inner angers, wills-to-eliminate this or that blemish from a fair world? And what is love without the hatred of all that destroys or degrades it? There is a lot to hate, *ergo* a lot to fight." Throughout the book one senses a welcome tone of confidence. The situation is not as grim as it is sometimes painted. There is reasonable hope for man. A pleasant collection of papers, on the whole, though uneven in length and quality, and they are mercifully free from politics and "isms"!

*Speculation in Pre-Christian Philosophy.* By Richard Kroner. Pp. xiv + 276. (Longmans, London. 16s.)

THERE are many works in English on Greek Philosophy, some of them historical and analytic, others more interpretative, and the interpretations can range from the religious to that of a book which I reviewed not long ago, in which the whole development of the Greek genius was explained in terms of Marx and Stalin. Dr Kroner's recent volume—the first of a trilogy—belongs rather to the second category, of which it is a welcome and indeed a distinguished example. He is himself a scholar and teacher of long experience—in Germany at Kiel and Frankfort, and at the Union Theological Seminary in New York, and more recently in Temple University, Philadelphia. The volumes he is now publishing have risen in part from his lectures at the Union seminary on the "History of Philosophy from the Christian Point of View".

This does not mean that Dr Kroner is baptizing Greek thinkers as was done by Alexandrian Christians in the third century. He does not pretend that Greek thought was a *praeparatio evangelica* among the gentiles, as many Christians came to suppose, but he is aware of the immense influence it has had on Christian thinking. In itself Greek philosophy was unChristian, though Clement of Alexandria could refer to Plato as a "Moses speaking Greek". Yet he thinks it ridiculous to make the simple distinction between Greek thought as speculative and Christian thinking as religious because based upon revelation. He goes further back and sees revelation as a background for Greek philosophy as it gradually unfolded itself. By this "revelation" he means no specific religious book, for Greek thought was in a sense a revolt against the "religious books" of



Homer and Hesiod, but a vision or grasp of the truth in things, which is something that speculation of itself can never give. Many of the early thinkers were religious in their reactions against the prevailing popular beliefs. The Pythagoreans lived in religious communities, Heraclitus and Empedocles wrote like prophets, and Platonic thinking culminates in the supreme vision of the Good. To the Greek mind things *revealed* themselves as signs and symbols of a loftier world. The Greeks speculated widely, even at times wildly, but always they came back to the heart of things, to Being, the essential and abiding element. Knowledge was discovery after the adventure of research. Process was subordinate to realization; they would never have deemed it better to travel hopefully than to arrive. The reason why they could introduce the Western world to science and mathematics was that they understood there was something beyond both of them, and it was crowned with an intuition, a vision of the Real.

Dr Kroner is aware that there are dangers in reinterpretation. But he claims that the study of philosophy can never be wholly objective like mathematics or natural science. The character of philosophy "merely corresponds to the questionable nature of our world and of our own existence. Our world is *not only mathematical*; it is *also mysterious*. And it is this second feature that arouses philosophic interest and labour. It is ridiculous to demand the same method for philosophy and for mathematics. Even such great thinkers as Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz, insisting upon the mathematical ideal, unsuccessfully aimed at a mathematical method in philosophy. The metaphysics of Descartes and Spinoza, and the monadology of Leibniz are not based upon the mathematical method, even though they proclaimed such a method to be ideal". Dr Kroner's contention is that the history of thought is dominated by these two factors, speculation and revelation. Speculation is what man contributes; revelation, what he receives. There are intimate links which connect and interrelate them, and yet widely diverging approaches and point of view. Speculation cannot attain a final goal without revelation.

This book is admirably written, with a lucidity and conciseness which the ancient Greeks would have appreciated, and it has a warmth and sincerity that appeal. I conclude with one further passage, which has a relevance for all thinking, even though in it one can detect Kantian undertones:

One might say revelation is the silent and concealed judge of all speculation, precisely because it is not speculative itself, but

beyond and above all speculation. Revelation dominates the scene from behind the horizon of thought, just because it can never be resolved into thought. It reveals what cannot be analysed or demonstrated and what therefore is the supreme basis, the ultimate goal, and the eternal centre of all that can be analysed and demonstrated.

*Katholische Dogmatik: Band III, I.* By Prälat Michael Schmaus. Pp. xv + 934. (Max Hueber Verlag, Munich. D.M. 34; (bound) D.M. 36.50.)

THE reissue of this volume of Prälat Schmaus's *Katholische Dogmatik* apparently completes the fifth edition of a standard theological work that is certainly well known on the Continent. Yet the author states that this particular volume which treats the material *De Ecclesia*—the character, establishment and authority of Christ's Church—has been entirely recast and has now little in common with the original edition. For this radical revision he gives two reasons. Firstly, the appearance since 1940 of many important documents on the subject, most significant among them the encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*: and then—a matter of great actuality in post-war Germany—the transformed relationship between Catholics and Lutherans. Nowhere do Protestants take so keen an interest in Catholic theology and, conversely, Catholic scholars so live an interest in Protestant doctrines as in the classic land of Protestantism, Western Germany.

Prälat Schmaus confesses that his method of treatment has been determined by this second factor. It is, he considers, the responsibility of Catholic theologians to explain Catholic truth with lucidity and frankness to their Protestant "brethren" (*den protestantischen Brüdern*) and to do so in language that Protestants will be able to comprehend. They must bring out what Catholics themselves think and teach about the Church, express their Catholic *Selbstverständnis* (self-awareness, self-appreciation). This is to be the basis of all discussion with Lutherans. This Catholic respect for Lutherans is paralleled by a similar Lutheran regard for Catholic teaching. One of the main resolutions of the assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in 1957 was in favour of a special institute to be devoted to theological discussion between Lutherans and Catholics. In this present volume, Prälat Schmaus has two purposes in mind: to analyse Catholic teaching for the Catholic student, and to explain and discuss it with Lutherans. The atmosphere is therefore eirenic; due weight is of course given to the claims of truth and the force of argument, but themes are calmly discussed rather than hotly or eloquently argued.

Nevertheless, the general line of treatment remains traditional,

even if there is stronger stress on the dogmatic rather than the apologetic side. Prälat Schmaus claims very properly that this is not a textbook, though it provides valuable assistance to the serious student. It supposes some familiarity with the main arguments. It is admirably clear, well-arranged, and richly endorsed with material from Scripture and tradition.

The division is into three sections. The first, after an introduction on the *præparatio evangelica*, deals with the establishment of the Church by Christ and with apostolic and Petrine succession. The position is built up, piece by piece, carefully and very solidly. Particular attention is paid to topics, e.g. the Petrine texts and the handling on of Papal authority, where there are strong differences of view on the Protestant side. The second section, that ranges far and wide, treats of the Church as God's chosen people, as the Mystical Body and also the Bride of Christ; the influence and activity of the Holy Spirit within the Church; the Church's visible character and its note of authority; the traditional "marks", especially those of unity and catholicity. The final section studies the Church's mission: its relation to God's glory and the kingdom of God; the communion of saints and sacramental life.

The author tells us that some delay occurred in the production of this volume, but that this proved to be a *felix culpa*, in that it allowed him to incorporate much new material which appeared as late as 1957. We are tempted to echo this remark for another reason: it has permitted him to present his material with remarkable orderliness and completeness. The indexes and the detailed bibliography, drawn from periodicals, are excellent; the general production is wholly admirable.

*Matter, Mind and Man.* By Edmund W. Sinnott. Pp. 196. (George Allen and Unwin, London. 18s.)

THE latest volume of "World Perspectives"—an assorted miscellany of books selected by an international board of editors—is contributed by Dr Edmund W. Sinnott, once Director of the Sheffield Scientific School at Yale University. Its title suggests its contents, and it is yet another of those many attempts to consider man's emergence from the process of world development and to give some intelligible account of his special position and capacities. The author steers carefully between the Scylla of the mechanists whom he obviously dislikes, and whose explanations he deems incomplete and unsatisfactory, and the Charybdis of the vitalists, and his course brings him much closer to the latter. He accepts their notion of "purpose", even if he has an interpretation of his own to add to it.

What he will not accept is the "entelechy"—to use Driesch's expression—the substantial factor directing the living organism from within.

In spite of this, his whole emphasis is on purpose. This is not the purpose of a "final cause", for that, he remarks, is opposed to scientific ideas of causation. So much the worse, it might be added, for those scientific ideas! For, in the last resort, there can be no purpose without such a cause; there cannot be *tele-ology* without a *telos*. Yet he observes pattern in nature and states that directive self-regulation is what characterizes living things. The two main factors in life are this self-regulation and the continual movement towards certain goals. At this point he quotes from General Smuts: "Mind is a continuation, on a much higher plane, of the system of organic self-regulation and co-ordination which characterizes Holism in organisms. Mind is thus the direct descendant of organic regulation and carries forward the process." However, according to Dr Sinnott, the process originates not from a creator outside the process, but from the living stuff, the protoplasm, of the process itself. The "mental" grows out of the "developmental", and the two are aspects of the same protoplasmic development.

Dr Sinnott is writing as a biologist, not a philosopher, and he is using biological material. On the whole, he is on the side of the angels, though the angels might be puzzled by some of his arguments. Stressing throughout the "continuity" of evolution, he misses the fundamental differences between physical and intellectual activity, and he assumes that mind is latent in everything. The edges are blurred; everything is caught up in the one process. He recognizes human liberty, rejecting determinism; he appreciates spiritual values; but, while he does this, he offers little argument in their favour except the biological. They all emerge in some mysterious manner during the evolutionary process.

The position here defended is briefly this: that neither protoplasm itself nor man, its highest expression, are neutral systems in which whatever happens is the result only of outer forces, but the specific inner ones are also effective; that the character and organization of living stuff is such that goals are set up within it which are characteristic and specific at all levels, though subject in their particular quality and effect to the influence of the environment; that the progressive advance in these goals during evolution, though in large measure certainly the result of natural selection, has been due in part to specific tendencies in protoplasm itself; and, most important of all, that the direction in which these goals have advanced is such that in man they

tend to create the high ideals of beauty, right, truth and the Divine which in a real sense may be called spiritual. Spirit in man is a result of the autonomous, creative quality that is his. Like the wind, it moves where it lists; but whence it comes, and whither it goes, we do not know.

Dr Sinnott endeavours to justify human and spiritual values in biological and evolutionary terms. That he inevitably fails to do so is not his fault, but that of his physics and biology. His intention is laudable enough and indeed he repeats that only a philosophy of "goal" or "draw" and not a philosophy of "drive", can adequately explain man's achievements.

The conception of goal rather than drive as the basis of motivation is much more in harmony with a philosophy that puts the encouragement of high ideals and aspirations as the best means of elevating mankind rather than one which depends on environment and conditioning and finally on physiological mechanisms to do so. The latter are certainly important, but unless man learns to *want* what is beautiful and good and true, he will never attain these things.

*Readings in the Philosophy of Nature.* By Henry J. Koren, c.s.sp. Pp. xi + 401. (Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland. \$2.25.)

ONE of the problems of a teacher of scholastic philosophy is how to encourage students to do some wider reading without detriment to their study of a systematic textbook. Experience suggests that this problem is not often happily solved, and that the majority of students are content to work their way through the official textbooks, without bothering to read much or anything outside.

Duquesne University in the United States has a far-ranging plan to cope with this situation, by publishing a series of handbooks or anthologies on different aspects of philosophy. The series will eventually include volumes of readings in the history of Philosophy, Natural Theology, Epistemology, Ethics, the Philosophy of Education, Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Man. Fr Koren, who is in charge of the Philosophy department at the university, has inaugurated the course with his readings in the Philosophy of Nature.

It includes extracts of varying length from philosophers like Kant, Descartes, Newton, and more modern scientists such as Max Planck, Einstein, Max Born and Henri Poincaré, and a good many articles from periodicals and chapters from published books. Naturally, the scholastic writers are fully represented. The whole material is arranged under a number of major headings: What is the Phil-

osoph  
The 1  
Indiv

regre  
possil  
Kore  
They  
lems  
juxta  
ment  
its "  
extra  
than

Père  
(

It is  
know  
case  
of le

Fou  
mus  
attr  
hap  
dou  
big  
Hu  
mu  
whi  
par  
sing

are  
the  
any  
her  
the  
Ge  
gro  
ha

osophy of Nature? Physical Science and the Philosophy of Nature, The Nature of Matter, Quantity, Motion, Space and Time, The Individual Body and, finally, Physical Causality.

This is an age of "digests" and "anthologies" and one may regret the passing of more leisured periods when it was apparently possible to read with greater ease and freedom. However, Fr Koren's selected passages will be a boon for the ordinary student. They provide a survey of Catholic and other thought on the problems of physical science. Further, articles have been deliberately juxtaposed to provoke discussion. From pages 135 to 176 six arguments are put forward on Hylomorphism, and each is followed by its "critique". Inevitably, with this particular subject, some of the extracts make heavy going, but for this the material itself rather than Fr Koren must be held responsible.

J. M.

*Père de Foucauld. Abbé Huvelin. Correspondence Inédite.* Pp. 294. (Desclee & Co. (Paper)).

IT is always said that one should read the letters of a man to get to know his character. How happy it is for us to be able to do so in the case of so many great names of the past, a thing which with the death of letter-writing future generations will not be able to do.

Here is a case in point—the unedited letters of Charles de Foucauld and his guide, philosopher and friend Abbé Huvelin. It must at once be said that though Charles de Foucauld on the whole attracts more attention, it is possible that greater wisdom and perhaps holiness too were on the side of the Abbé. The editor leaves no doubt where his weight lies, printing Père Charles' letters in the bigger typescript. But this may not be quite fair, because Abbé Huvelin was during this period a sick and dying man, pressed by multitudinous calls, and scarcely able to write from his sick-bed, while his penitent was driving out into the desert, alone for the most part, mentally as well as physically seeking his vocation, and expressing his thoughts on paper to his adviser.

There is much to be learnt from the letters on both sides. There are the long, deeply thought, urgent, lonely and burning words from the desert, matched at rarer intervals by short, decisive replies. For anyone who has an interest in the strange life of the officer turned hermit and wishes to understand better the link between him and the invalid Abbé in Paris, this will be a rewarding book. Perhaps God used Abbé Huvelin directly as His instrument to snatch this great soul "from the burning". We must be grateful that these letters have been preserved and now published.

*Return to the Church.* By Charles Davis. Pp. 16. (Pastoral Publications, 1s. each. £2 for 50 (paper)).

THIS brochure is the successor to *Baptism*, which sold the fine figure of 12,000 in a year. Nevertheless, it could be said at once that it is hoped more will come to know the *Baptism* brochure and that it will continue to be bought. If it is to be used properly, it should have a steady sale.

Now Fr Davis presents us with the similar formula, but covering the reconciliation of a convert to the Church. The form used is exactly the same. I am not quite sure why it is this particular shape, but there is probably a reason. To me it seems awkward for keeping after the ceremony, as it is not a shape to fit anywhere, but that is probably just being fussy!

The most noticeable thing is that the ceremony is given throughout in English, for the convenience of the person being reconciled, but with various responses also in Latin. There are a series of photographic illustrations, of the ceremony, the font, the altar and also two of our Lady and one of Christ glorified in heaven.

In addition to the bare text Fr Davis has written notes as a commentary. There is quite a long, detailed and deep exposition of the Church—our Mother, which brings out the meaning of conversion, and with the keeping of the brochure, could well be read over annually on the date of reconciliation. In the text itself, the division of commentary and text is very clearly done in red and black, and set out under different headings, which make a useful grouping of the purpose behind the whole ceremony.

At this point, therefore, before going on to be critical, I would like to say that the idea is admirable, and these two brochures should be widely used, and of very great benefit to many.

But at the same time, in the hope of modifications and further developments, perhaps I could say a few things which have struck me. In the first place, no matter what we may say or think, it is still difficult, up and down the length of the non-Catholic world, to get right the place of our Lady in the Church. I know I can be shouted down on all sides, but I think that the front and back cover might not be the best suited to a newcomer. Many, I have known, take a long time to grow used to our way of thought. I am not disputing the truth of the image or of what is said, but merely the wisdom of stressing it at this time and place.

My second criticism is that the language used is still very much the language of yesteryear. It is becoming more and more necessary to use words which have got a meaning outside scholastic circles . . . in other words, the less we use ecclesiastical language in brochures

of this  
person

M  
accor  
The b  
further  
ward,  
entry  
join,  
The t  
some  
of the  
fession  
where  
word

You c  
C

CON  
whic  
in the  
Ame  
J  
died  
first  
apt  
Hol  
of h  
train  
mus

lay  
tak  
Th  
is v



of this sort, the more likely we are to hold the interest of the ordinary person.

My third is this, twofold almost. The text is in English, and according to our laws, we are only allowed to reconcile in Latin. The brochure recognizes a necessity, but we can get nowhere in furthering the fulfilment of the need, unless it can be pressed forward, that we really should help many more, especially on their entry into the Church, by making it something in which they can join, and which they can understand. So that the second half is this. The translations used are varied. Some are known, some are new, some (the *Te Deum*) seem almost to belong to the service of one of the "errors" renounced. And the form of reconciliation (Profession of Faith) is the shorter one, which can hardly ever be used; whereas the longer one (as used in Westminster), which is so harshly worded that it might well come up for revision, is not given.

*You are not your Own.* By Dennis J. Geaney, O.S.A. Pp. 178. (Geoffrey Chapman. 6s. 6d. (paper)).

CONTINUING in their apostolic policy of publishing mainly works which are connected in some way with the Apostolate, and especially in the field of Catholic Action, Geoffrey Chapman now give us this American work, coming originally from Chicago.

The book begins with an introduction by Cardinal Stritch, who died recently, just after his arrival in Rome, where he was to be the first American Cardinal working there permanently. It is rather apt that, just as he should have been called to Rome to assist the Holy Father directly, so he should stress in this foreword the hierarchy of help within the Church. The bishop needs his priests, and so he trains them in seminaries. But he also needs his layfolk. And they too must be trained. As he writes:

In the Archdiocese of Chicago, we have long encouraged this work and have had the satisfaction of seeing concrete results. The Christian Family Movement, the Young Christian Workers and the Young Christian Students have given us many fine lay leaders, the kind that can be relied upon to assist in the great work of restoring all things in Christ.

So the author has tried in the pages of his book to set forth "the layman's responsibility for the world in which he lives, works and takes his recreation". In order to do this, he writes in a direct way. The appeal is not to the abstract, but to the concrete individual who is walking the streets, typing in the office, nursing the baby. The

style is conversational, real, unpolished. It is the new method being used, to try to get across to people the deep ideas behind the theology of the Mystical Body, without using the theological terms, which are so lacking meaning to these very men in the street.

Some people may find it a little annoying that there is so much of the illustration of the individual . . . "she was a secretary working in a big office, only intent on serving her boss" . . . "Vince was not the sharpest boy who ever went to high school". There is always the danger almost of writing down, unless we are careful.

But the book is alive with ideas. It should provoke lay people into asking what they are doing for God in a solid, positive way.

The long and short of it is that this is a very valuable book, which should be bought by anyone who is going to work with boys. Not only will it help them, lay or clerical, to "get at" the soul of these possible young apostles, but it will be of great use in the making of retreats and the planning of days of recollection within schools.

*The Challenge of Bernadette.* By Hugh Ross Williamson. Pp. 101. (Burns & Oates. 10s. 6d.)

THE name of Hugh Ross Williamson is already too well known in print, play, on radio and television, to need introduction. But the question could well be asked as to why he had decided to write about Bernadette. Well, apart from the natural interest which has been aroused in this centenary year, there is also the fact, which most observers will agree upon, that those who come into the Church seem to become aware of that side of devotion which had been somewhat stunted before, namely devotion to our Lady.

And so, rather than seeing Lourdes from the viewpoint of the "ordinary Catholic", Hugh Ross Williamson sees Bernadette as a figure challenging the world of today with the truth of the Faith. If she saw our Lady, then how clearly is emphasized the development of doctrine and the firm decisiveness of teaching through the Church right up to the present time!

The fact of Lourdes cannot be gainsaid. By many, however, it can be ignored or brushed aside. Hence it is important to set out plainly the character of Bernadette, the opposition which she encountered, the reliability of her story, the future evolving of her life, entirely hidden and under obedience. It can be said without fear of contradiction that Hugh Ross Williamson's approach to the story and his interpretation of the facts is compelling and fresh. His mind has seen Lourdes from a different angle, and therefore his lights and shades make good contrast with the more usual books on this subject.

*Melody in your Hearts.* Edited by Rev. George L. Kane. Pp. 171.  
(Newman Press. \$3.00.)

THIS book is a sequel to one already published under the title *Why I Entered the Convent*. The success of the first series was so great and the correspondence which ensued so worth while, it was decided to do a "follow-up", and hence there is the present work.

Perhaps the nicest side to this series is the tremendous freshness and humour which emerges from the pages. It would be useless to try to describe what these stories are. Quite simply, they illustrate the life of each sister in several different communities.

The great joy is that they all thought it would be a good idea to have this follow-up, and so agreed to write, and then as one nun puts it:

The deadline arrived much before even a rough draft of the chapter, simply because I was too busy doing what I wanted to write about. Apologetically and a bit red-faced, I wrote to tell the editor so.

And the editor replied:

Thank you for your letter. . . . You will be relieved to know you are not the only delinquent; you have TEN companions . . . though several of the authors have written frantically to tell me that they are rushed to death and will finish their stories in a week or two. . . .

It says much for the editor and for the stories that they run so smoothly and are so full of peace and joy. They would be most helpful to anyone who had "peculiar ideas" about nuns.

*Mary. Mary's seven words. Mary's seven sorrows.* By Peter Lippert (translated). Pp. 78. (Clonmore & Reynolds. 5s. 6d. (paper)).

FR LIPPERT, S.J., has been translated before from German to English, so that he is not unknown in this country. Many will already have read *Job the Man speaks with God*.

There are now published a brief series of meditations which come from the earlier part of his life. A note of his in the first manuscript says: "These are materials for meditation, thoughts and suggestions, and the aim is that the reader should consider them further on his own, and ponder over them."

They bear the stamp of simple little sermons. One can almost feel the holy man gripping his congregation in a way which any

preacher would want to do, in order to drive home the profound truths of the Faith. Their age has dated the method of approach, the words and turning of the phrases indicate translation. But for all that there is very deep wisdom, and an insight which should help especially those who find devotion to Mary a difficulty.

The first series on Mary's words are most helpful in regard to our prayer. The second series should make clearer the part which was hers in the suffering of her Son, from which we too may get an understanding of the part which we must play.

*Grown Up.* By John Carr, C.S.S.R. Pp. 131. (Burns Oates. 9s. 6d.)

THE immodesty with which young women of today are frequently and not unreasonably charged is merely one expression of the modern cult of "unwomanliness", a mark of the general regression from the divine ideal of woman as the helper of man, complementary to him rather than rivalling him. The author of this little book, which is addressed to the young woman who has just emerged from adolescence, begins therefore by analysing the divine ideal of womanliness, its historical vicissitudes and present perils, its positive aspects of purity and unworldliness, and the kind of company-keeping which it supposes. To make the picture more concrete, he devotes a chapter to the lesson to be learnt from the story of the first Eve. Turning then to the two principal vocations open to women, the married state and the religious state, he considers the criteria by which a young woman should be guided in her choice. Not all have this choice, but all are called to the apostolate of good example and to the cultivation of personal sanctity. Both of these universal vocations are therefore considered, and the whole is then summed up in the divine model of Christ, first Child of Mary.

The book is written in a lively style, with a plentiful sprinkling of anecdotes and wise counsels, and it should make a suitable present for girls who have left school and are about to make their bow to life in the wider world.

M. H.

#### PERMISSU SUPERIORUM

nd  
the  
all  
elp

to  
ich  
an

ntly  
the  
ion  
ary  
ok,  
rom  
of  
tive  
ny-  
he  
the  
n to  
the  
ice.  
ood  
these  
then

ling  
sent  
life

ed for  
.I, in